Public Journalism: A Familiar Practice or New Concept? A study of John Cowles Sr. and Public Journalism

A master's thesis written by Lisa M. Russell, a graduate student
at Drake University School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

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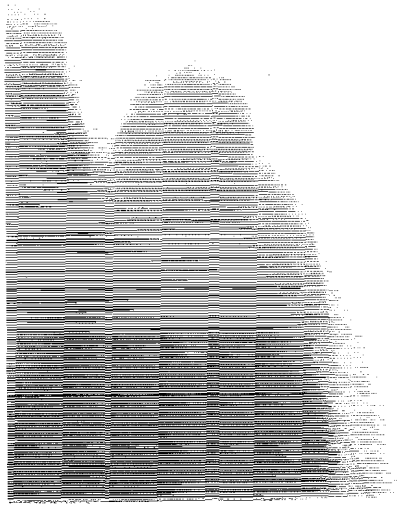

Lisa M. Russell

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Advisor: Professor Herbert Strentz

There are journalists who would liken public journalism to the Phoenix that rose from the ashes of the failure of conventional journalism. Perhaps this observation is melodramatic, but public journalists often claim they have found the solution to save democracy. Yet these same people who claim that democracy is in decline and that traditional journalistic practices have significantly contributed to this decline may ignore that public journalism is a continuation of many beliefs, principles and theories that have shaped American journalism. Even the conditions that prompted the public journalism movement themselves are neither new nor unique. Throughout history public, governmental and even internal criticism of the media's performance can be found. Within that criticism can be found similar issues — public disinterest, government and elected officials attempting to control information, and journalists' failure to contribute to democracy. This thesis seeks to compare and contrast the journalistic philosophy of John Cowles Sr., a newspaper publisher whose career spans from the 1930s through the 1970s, within the current continuum of journalism, particularly focusing on public journalism. As the public journalism debate continues there is a need to examine what kind of journalism has been effective in the past instead of focusing primarily what is wrong. Concentrating on areas where journalism has worked before the advent of public journalism could provide examples of successful journalistic practices similar to what public journalists are promoting. In particular, this thesis finds the journalism practiced by John Cowles Sr. is a case study of the same "new" theory advocated by public journalists in the 1990s.

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Chapter One — Introduction

> If there is no consensus on what to call it, most American journalists — and increasingly journalists elsewhere — have no difficulty recognizing the term public or civic journalism. It denotes a simple but controversial premise: the purpose of the press is to promote and indeed to improve, and not merely report on or complain about, the quality of public or civic life. (Glasser and Craft, 1998, 204)

This simple statement hints at the complexities of the ongoing public journalism debate. It raises such questions such as how should the news media promote public life if it is not "merely" to report on it? Where do traditional values and practices fit in this new journalistic practice? And most important, is there something wrong with our concept of democracy? The assumption there is something wrong appears to have some validity by the simple observation that there is an increasing amount of literature outside the realm of journalism that claims democracy is in decline. (Glasser and Craft, 1998, 206) While public journalism may be a noble and worthy cause, there are many facets to the debate that raise questions about how it truly differs from traditional journalism.

There is a struggle to define public journalism. This is not surprising because journalism itself is a continuum. That is, if a continuum were drawn with "detached" marked on one end and "active civic participant" on the other, journalists would find themselves at different points because of their own beliefs, as well as the policies of their individual organizations. For this continuum, "detached" would apply to journalists who report just the facts without the analysis needed to show why these facts may be important. An "active civic participant" would go beyond a publisher who serves on the local chamber of commerce board of directors. The "civic participant" is an activist — a journalist who disregards any semblance of providing balance in a story. While public

journalists may find themselves mostly clustered in one area of the continuum, they are not exactly the same. Some embrace a movement that calls to reevaluate the prevailing beliefs, principles and theories that shape today's journalism. In the end, they may believe this call to reevaluate equates only with the refocusing of traditional theory. On the other hand, other public journalists who believe that journalism needs a radical overhaul.

Public journalism literature often makes the assumption there are only two types of journalists — those who acknowledge their involvement in public life and those who continue to embrace detachment from their communities. Jay Rosen, a leading proponent of public journalism, labeled these two groups public journalists and conventional journalists when he contrasted their attitudes in his book, *Doing Public Journalism.* (1995, 10) The classification of journalists by public journalists is mostly black and white — either a journalist supports the beliefs set forth by public journalism, or he does not. But this assumption is puzzling considering the complexity of the media. If this distinction is followed, then public journalists are seen as progressive, and conventional journalists are traditionalists. In other words, conventional journalists are seen as the obstacle to change within the profession.

This view has limitations. It assumes that groups such as the alternative press and emerging press would fall into one of the two categories even though they clearly have their own distinct characteristics. For example, it is difficult to categorize the alternative press because they often have a narrow focus. Often times they exist to promote a single viewpoint or issue and may be considered progressive for that reason. *The Washington Blade*, which covers gay and lesbian issues in Washington, D.C., is an example. The

emerging media, particularly those associated with the Internet, are so new it is difficult to determine the defining characteristics with any confidence. The Internet appears to be already blurring the line between journalist and consumer — The Drudge Report is just one example.[1]

A profession that does not engage in self-criticism or evaluation does not grow. Public journalism evolved as a response to criticism from both inside and outside the media. This criticism suggests journalism and democracy are in the worst shape of their histories. Glasser and Craft observed public journalism "presumes a democracy in decay and posits a role for the press that is based, empirically and normatively, on what journalism can do to enrich a public discourse which has long been in decline." (1998, 204) But, criticism of journalistic practices has occurred throughout the history of the United States, and journalists initiating journalistic reform are certainly not a new breed. The following statements are striking because they were made some 40 to 60 years apart.

On journalism:

> That public confidence in the integrity and disinterestedness of American newspapers as a whole has declined in recent years few journalists will deny. Attacks on newspapers have increased both in number and importance . . . (Cowles, 1938)

> In part, (journalists) were troubled by the low quality of much of their own work; in part, by evidence that the public they had intended to serve distrusted newspapers and increasingly didn't even read them. (Charity, 1995, 1)

On the public:

> People soon sense whether or not a newspaper is being edited in the public interest. If it is not, its patronage is likely to be scanty, and operating costs have

[1] However, because of the scope of alternative and emerging journalism and their continually changing practices, they will not be examined in this paper.

> become so large that the maintenance for selfish reasons of continuously heavy loser is a luxury that few can afford. (Cowles, 1958)
>
> The way to secure a vital future for the press is to strengthen, in any practical way that can be found, all the forces that pull people into civic affairs, engage them in the give-and-take of political dialogue, make participants out of spectators, and illuminate the promise of public life. (Rosen, 1996, 5)

Comparing the statements attributed to John Cowles Sr., a leading newspaper publisher in the 1930s through his retirement in 1974, and those by Arthur Charity and Jay Rosen demonstrates all arrived at a similar understanding of problems with journalism even though their observations were made decades apart.

It is not uncommon for a generation to discuss whether the future is going to be worse than the problems faced today. Parents worry about leaving their children a world that is politically, ecologically and socially unstable. This concern has led to debates about the environment, education, crime and many other issues meant to discover ways to make life a little bit better. These debates are not solely about making the present better; they also address what may become our legacy. It is natural to wonder how future generations will perceive our contribution to society.

To some degree, the rhetoric of public journalism is an example of a generation expressing concern about how its problems will affect future generations. This appears to be a well-founded concern. E.J. Dionne Jr. observed in his book in *Why Americans Hate Politics* that as a society we have been "running down the public sector and public life . . . Because of our flight from public life, our common citizenship no longer fosters a sense of community or common purpose." (1991, 10) Similarly, public journalism evolved after the 1988 presidential election primarily because of a prevailing belief that something

was fundamentally wrong with journalism, and, ultimately, that shortcoming was affecting society.

It has been understood through the years that there is an important role for the media in a thriving democracy. *In Agents of Power,* J. Herbert Altschull argues that "one of the primary assumptions held by the American citizen is that democracy thrives in part because of the information disseminated by the news media." (1984, 18) This assumption rests on the belief that democracy is a free society governed by its citizens. Because citizens need information to make decisions about their lives — decisions that indirectly affect society overall — the media must provide information about the state of the society, the government and any other information the public may desire.

The First Amendment has been referred to as the "American Experiment" because in the Bill of Rights the First Amendment was the only one not reflected in governing principles of other nations. Rosen wrote in *Getting the Connections Right,* "The American experiment is a continuous political test, in the sense there is no deeper footing than democracy, no state religion or revered monarchy, to hold the country together. As a powerful institution that is part of the experiment, the press itself is continually tested. Like the rest of us, it may rise to the occasion or be found wanting." (1996, 3) At numerous times in this country's history individual members of the media have responded to criticism from both journalists and the public by analyzing and offering their own critique of the current media performance. Thus, public journalists are not the first journalists to note a decay of American society. For example, John Cowles Sr. believed that journalism was heading in a downward spiral in 1938, and now Jay Rosen and other public journalists are voicing a similar concern 60 years later. There is little

doubt that journalism has had its peaks and valleys in terms of effectiveness, ethics and general appeal to the public. Yet according to public journalists, democracy is now in danger of being irreparably damaged. And, more important, they believe journalism has contributed greatly to this problem.

There are other similar movements — civic, communitarian and solutions journalism — currently seeking to reconnect with their audience in order to enhance public life. For the purposes of this paper, public journalism is used as it is defined by Jay Rosen, a professor of journalism at New York University and director of the Project on Public Life and the Press.

> Public journalism calls on the press to help revive civic life and improve public dialogue — and to fashion a coherent response to the deepening troubles in our civic climate, most of which implicate journalists. (Rosen, 1996)

In other words, public journalists seek to change what have been considered traditional journalistic core values. Yet because many of the core values public journalism describe are already entrenched in traditional journalism, journalists are being asked to alter their practices. Although they do not address values, Glasser and Craft criticize those who criticize public journalism because it represents

> a genuinely innovative, if not altogether successful, effort to move journalists away from thinking about the claims of 'separation' that have long defined the practice of American journalism and toward thinking about the claims of 'connection' that might redefine and reinvigorate the role of the press in a democratic society. (1998, 203)

With this in mind, this paper explores a number of issues that focus primarily on newspaper journalism. First, the thesis considers how have journalists historically responded to challenges of covering news in responsible and meaningful ways? Second, this thesis looks at the life of John Cowles Sr., an editor and publisher who used

community involvement to create a newspaper meant for the public without compromising the tenets of traditional journalism, including fairness, objectivity and balance. And, finally, the paper draws comparisons and contrasts between public journalism and conventional journalism.

Chapter Two — The Public Journalism Debate

The debate surrounding public journalism, including the theories and concepts used to define the term, is the primary focus of this literature review. Yet, it must be understood that the concept behind public journalism did not just materialize in the late 1980s. Instead, it might be considered an evolutionary process in journalism history. There are obvious influences of the libertarian and social responsibility theories, particularly within the claims that journalism should promote and even save democracy. In addition, the discussion of issues such as agenda-setting and objectivity in journalism is continued within the parameters of public journalism.

Public journalism. The concept of public journalism grew from discontent that had been present for some time in the media, but blossomed into a full-fledged debate following the 1988 presidential election. Journalists were frustrated by how candidates controlled political coverage during the campaigns. This conflicted with a deep-seated journalistic belief that the media are the watchdogs of government and politics.[2] Within this watchdog role, the media sought stories about what they believed the public should know and, ultimately, they set an agenda for the public.

However, throughout the 1988 presidential election journalists generally felt tied to an agenda provided by the candidates, who realized they could control their message and the media by staging planned events. The more planned the event, the greater the opportunity to present the candidate's views without error. Photo opportunities and

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[2] The idea of the press as watchdog is attributed to John Mill, who advocated "liberty of the press for utilitarian reasons, that is, out of a concern for responsibility. Press freedom, he thought, made 'known the conduct of the individuals who have been chosen to wield the powers of government.' " (Merrill, 1989, 42)

made-for-television images were a trademark of American political journalism by 1988.[3] They had evolved because of the media's reliance on daily tracking polls rather than covering issues — "horserace journalism." In *Media Messages in American Presidential Elections*, Diana Owen claimed the candidates and their campaigns held the key to information because journalists were not able to force candidates into discussions of more meaningful issues. For the most part, it seemed as though journalists were not interested in pushing the candidates into uncomfortable situations anyway. The media had become accustomed to allowing the candidates to control campaign issues, the election coverage had become staid and comfortable. (Owen, 1991, 61)

As journalists relied on information provided by individual campaigns, stories became more negative as candidates tried to draw distinctions between their views and their opponents. It had become easier for candidates to attack their opponents than it was to defend their own positions. The answer to the question of who was the better candidate for the job was muddied as answers were gathered from sources such as "candidates, consultants, free-floating quotesmiths (who) seem(ed) to be as addled about policy issues as the rest of us and prefer to deal in ethnic-cultural cant, marketing predictions and tactical speculation." (Boylan, 1992, 33) The source had become more important than the issues — the personality was more important than the substance.

In January 1990, David Broder, a widely respected journalist, suggested in a speech it was time to take the campaign agenda away from the consultants and spin

[3] For example, in a *Columbia Journalism Review* article, D.D. Guttenplan wrote about the frustrations of journalists during the 1988 election who had limited opportunities to actually question then-Vice President George Bush about issues. And, when there would appear to be an opportunity, Bush's campaign staff would stage a carefully crafted event that usually did not include an in-depth discussion of issues.

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nontraditional broadcast media, the candidates were seeking nontraditional print outlets. Bill Clinton granted an interview to *Rolling Stone Magazine* that discussed banking reform. (Guttenplan, 1992, 35) But once again, the focus had moved away from issues and back to the candidates. This was not the reform the media intended.

During the same election cycle, several papers were attempting to reshape local election coverage using public journalism techniques. One of the most noted "experiments" occurred in Wichita, Kansas, at the *Wichita Eagle* where editor David "Buzz" Merritt created a series called "People Project." As its name indicated, Merritt wanted the public to participate in shaping what would be covered in the upcoming election. Using 192 two-hour interviews with Wichita residents and the staff's own observations, the *Eagle* and two broadcast partners developed "a package of articles, service features, community events, and forums for swapping ideas . . ." (Rosen, 1996, 41) The "People Project" recognized that the problems with democracy were deeper than the media's election and campaign coverage. In its research, the *Eagle* found that people said they were alienated from many aspects in public life and were frustrated because the political process, educational system and judicial system did little to resolve problems. (Rosen, 1996, 40)

This sentiment was not necessarily a surprise to Merritt, who had been writing about public journalism for some time. As early as 1988, he called for a reworking of the contract between society and politics. In fact, the *Eagle's* initial public journalism project occurred in 1990 was intended to help shape coverage of the Kansas gubernatorial campaign when it appeared the candidates were going to avoid discussions about issues. In announcing that particular project, Merritt acknowledged in an editorial that journalists

have a certain bias in news coverage — themselves. He also pledged that instead of the paper covering the election, the *Eagle* would try its best to make the campaign cover the issues the public wanted. (Rosen, 1996, 35)

Although projects similar to the ones implemented in Wichita have been initiated throughout the United States, many are community-issue based rather than political-issue based. By one account, between 1992 and 1995 approximately 171 public journalism projects had taken place. (Hoyt, 1995, 28) Because there is no model for public journalism, each experiment has been tailored to the needs of the news media outlet organizing the effort. However, Merritt has identified a number of basic public journalism tenets including:

> (Public journalism) moves beyond the limited mission of "telling the news" to a broader mission of helping public life go forward.
>
> It moves from detachment to being a fair-minded participant in public life.
>
> It moves beyond only describing what is 'going wrong' to also imagining what 'going right' would be like.
>
> It moves from seeing people as consumers . . . to seeing them as a public, as potential actors in arriving at democratic solutions to public problems. (Sessions Stepp, 1996, 38)

Essentially, Merritt and other supporters of public journalism believe that to report on public life, journalists must be involved in society. To some, this might mean an editor or publisher being an active participant in the community — belonging to Rotary or the chamber of commerce. To others, it is the simple acknowledgement that journalists are as much a part of society as the people and events they are covering.

While it is not mandatory that a public journalist be active in a community, it is difficult for public journalists to envision journalists truly understanding their role as citizens without some form of involvement. In such involvement, public journalists seek to provide solutions to community problems. Public journalists have become more ends-oriented journalists, where journalists were previously means-oriented. In other words, public journalists lead the readers to potential solutions by offering examples within the news content and on the editorial page, where there is an endorsement of the projects, as well as a call for similar action in their own community. To some journalists this may not be a new concept; however, in the past, journalists talked about giving readers enough information to find solutions themselves. They did not necessarily provide examples for solutions, although there may have been calls to action made on the editorial pages. Even with this distinction, arguments may be made that there are newspapers that have sought solutions, they are just more impartial than what public journalism suggests.

The journalistic approaches defining public journalism.

Three significant journalistic approaches were brought into focus after the publication of the 1947 report, *A Free and Responsible Press*. These three approaches — social responsibility, the libertarian press theory and objectivity — have defined journalism for the latter half of the 20th century. In particular, *A Free and Responsible Press* is important because it also demonstrates another time when journalists were accused of harming democracy. As some public journalism supporters are quick to argue, there is a significant difference between the Commission's report and public journalism. As Glasser and Craft observe public journalism does not "put forth a call for

reform in a language sure to alienate the very journalists expected to lead the reformation." (1998, 206) Another important difference is that the Commission's report was criticism made by non-journalists. In public journalism much of the criticism is being made by journalists.

The Hutchins Commission. Perhaps one of the most comprehensive criticisms of the press came from *A Free and Responsible Press*. As public journalists argue, the Commission saw the media's function as serving democracy. The report

> contends that the press is free for the purpose of serving democracy; a press that shirks its democratic duties will lose its freedom. The report calls on the press to improve itself in the name of morality, democracy, and self-preservation. (Bates, 1995, 3)

Initiated by the publisher Henry Luce in 1942 the 13-member Commission was initially charged with determining obligations of a free press. Unlike public journalism, where the criticism of the media is primarily from the media, the Commission had no journalists. Yet, prior to the release of the report that *Editor & Publisher*, a journalism industry publication, had interviewed 15 editors who did not see much wrong with the makeup of the Commission.[5] (Bates, 1995, 10)

There appeared to be little threat in an examination of the freedoms that the press enjoyed. After all, for years as the press became more powerful, there had been numerous criticisms by journalists and those outside the profession. Bates noted

> whereas in 1911, Will Irwin could find in the Library of Congress only 'few treatises on the making of newspapers, a few volumes of pleasant reminiscences, one interesting but incomplete and shallow history,' a shelf of books was published in the 1920s and 1930s by Upton Sinclair, George Seldes, Harold Ickes,

[5] Bates also notes that *Editor and Publisher* found these same editors believed that the Commission would not concern itself with an overall analysis or criticism of the media because they saw little connection between press freedom and press performance.

> Silas Bent, (Nelson) Crawford, and Irwin himself, as well as a host of lesser-known figures. (Bates, 1995, 6)

These critiques were coming at a time when more and more information was available for interpretation and explanation. For the most part, journalists believed they were fulfilling their function by informing the public, which ultimately served democracy.

Yet the simple act of giving the public what they wanted — information — was dangerous, as Luce pointed out. As editor-in-chief of *Time* magazine, Luce believed objectivity was impossible to achieve although press responsibility was a must. Bates wrote that Luce noted in a 1937 speech that there were three imminent dangers in journalism.

> First, 'there is no significant restraint on vulgarity, sensationalism, and even incitement to criminality.' Second, journalism that slavishly follows public demand creates 'an enormous financial incentive to publish twaddle — yards and yards of mediocrity, acres of bad fiction and triviality, square miles of journalistic tripe.' Third and most serious, such a press fails to provide the information that feeds democracy. (Bates, 1995, 5)

In 1947, commission chairman Robert Maynard Hutchins and his committee echoed some of the same sentiments, but they went further than Luce had intended. They reported the press is free so that it can serve democracy, and it would forfeit that freedom if it does not. But within this observation, the Commission found fault with the press. The Commission called on the press to "improve itself in the name of morality, democracy, and self preservation." (Bates, 1995, 1) The Commission believed that if the media did not accept responsibility for their actions, then democracy was sure to suffer. In the end the Commission recommended five requirements for the media to meet if they were to act responsibly.

> Today our society needs, first, a truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning; second, a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism; third, a means of projecting the opinions and attitudes of the groups in the society to one another; fourth, a method of presenting and clarifying the goals and values of the society; and, fifth a way of reaching every member of the society by the currents of information, thought, and feeling which the press supplies. (Leigh, 1947, 20)

Social Responsibility. Social responsibility was among the many obligations of a free press the Commission cited. This obligation evolved from the Commission's observation that the media did not relate the day's news with larger issues affecting society. Ultimately, the Commission believed the media had a responsibility to provide a forum for the public to discuss and debate issues. This idea was furthered in *The Four Theories of the Press*, a book printed nearly nine years after the Commission's report. The authors observed the Hutchins Commission had little to do with the continued evolution of social responsibility. They noted social responsibility had been "expressed by other responsible editors since and quite independently of the Commission." (Siebert, Peterson, Schramm, 1956, 5)

The social responsibility theory as defined by Fredrick Siebert accepted "the role of the press in servicing the political system, in enlightening the public, in safeguarding the liberties of the individual; but it represents the opinion that the press has been deficient in performing those tasks." (Siebert, Peterson, Schramm, 1956, 74) The media's role was defined as serving democracy, but once again the media were falling short. But, as it had been with the Commission, it was difficult to cite specific examples of what the press could be doing to be more socially responsible. Was presenting the news in a balanced and detached method enough? Should the media be providing

solutions? The efforts of public journalists fit well into the arguments of social responsibility because now, even 50 years later, the media still struggle with their role in democracy.

Social responsibility is a necessary, but ambiguous function of the press that is made even more difficult by the advances in technology. In 1956, Siebert noted the media were influenced heavily by technology, which remains an issue today. (1956, 77) Technological advances are important because they allow for the growth of the media. Additional, faster and more efficient ways of providing information give the media more opportunities to offer more forums for the public to debate issues, but technology also gives the media greater room to be less responsible. Of course, government intervention to ensure media responsibility is an option, but it is an unpopular one. While there are existing legal sanctions such as the standing to sue for libel, the media have enjoyed the freedom provided by the First Amendment. And, overall, the legal system has been loath to impose restrictions on the media's freedom. Yet many would argue this has been in exchange for the expectation of a responsible press.

Libertarian press theory. The libertarian press theory was another theory addressed in the *Four Theories of the Press*. The theory itself can be traced to England in the late 1600s, and its principles provided the framework for the American press. Based on the assumption that humans are rational beings who have certain inherent rights, the libertarian press theory defines one of these rights as the pursuit of truth without restraint. (Merrill, 1990, 34) This belief was important because it assumed this freedom would "naturally result in a pluralism of information and viewpoints necessary in democratic

society." (Merrill, 1990, 35) In addition, it allowed the press to comment on the government without fear of recrimination.

The libertarian press theory is the sum of the works of many philosophers including Milton, Locke and John Stuart Mill. It brings together their theories of a self-righting principle and popular sovereignty. Thomas Jefferson is often noted as also advocating this inherent right. John Merrill observed in his discussion of libertarianism that Thomas Jefferson was a man "who clearly expressed the necessary relationship between a free (even if irresponsible) press and good, sound democratic government." (Merrill, 1996, 114) As Merrill notes in his observation of Jefferson, even in the libertarian press theory there is a need for social responsibility. In their discussion of the libertarian press theory, Sevrin and Tankard also acknowledged the idea of social responsibility in the libertarian press theory. They claim there is no room for defamation, obscenity, indecency, wartime sedition even as libertarian journalists serve as an instrument for checking the power of government and meeting other needs of society. (1997, 346)

Freedom is central to the libertarian press theory because the theory promotes the idea that the media's freedom from government control is essential to the overall freedom of the citizenry. A free press's contribution to democracy is to provide the public with information needed to participate intelligently in public life. Therefore, "if the press, or any unit of the press, fails to provide the kind of service the citizenry is entitled to in a democracy, it must forfeit its freedom." (Merrill, 1990, 31)

Among the ways to describe freedom is to recognize two types of freedom — positive and negative. Positive freedom can be described as the freedom to do something,

and negative freedom is a freedom from restraint or the freedom from being "coerced or enslaved." (Merrill, 1990, 22) Merrill acknowledged there are people who cannot see the difference between the two freedoms, and there are those who see negative freedom as irresponsible and positive freedom as socially responsible. (Merrill, 1996, 23) This disparity exists because

> it appears that we are all caught somewhere between the extremes of human freedom and human bondage . . . the journalist is never completely free, either in the negative or the positive sense. Caught in the twilight zone between compulsion and inertia, he or she stumbles along through the shadows of dialectic journalism. Unfortunately, not all journalists can do; even more unfortunately, those who can do, often do not do. (Merrill, 1996, 24)

This observation could be used to describe the public journalism debate. As Merrill defined these two freedoms, there is a striking correlation between positive freedom and public journalism and negative freedom and conventional journalism. Negative freedom may be equated to conventional journalism because both hold the belief that democracy can only work is if there is a free press with no government interference. Proponents of positive freedom would likely find themselves agreeing with public journalists. Positive freedom is "doing something good or at least doing something." (Merrill, 1996, 115) The action of doing something with one's freedom implies that journalists are active participants in what they are reporting, similar to what public journalists suggest is necessary to save democracy. However, "doing something" no matter what it might be, implies the journalist is an active participant in the story. For many journalists, such participation conflicted with the idea that journalists are observers detached from what they are reporting. This division between positive and negative

freedom, as well as public and conventional journalism, provokes discussions about the roles and definitions of objectivity and bias.

Objectivity. From Benjamin Franklin's endorsement of presenting all sides of a controversial subject so the reader can make an educated decision to today's journalist, the concept of objectivity has been a journalism centerpiece. (Altschull, 1984, 25) Regardless of whether it is a debate about public journalism or any other aspect of the profession, objectivity is continually debated because there are many ways to define objectivity. As Merrill discussed in *The Imperative of Freedom*, journalists view objectivity in one of two ways — either as realists or idealists. Like positive and negative freedom, these categories are strikingly similar to how public journalists distinguish between themselves and conventional journalists with regard to objectivity.

The detached, unbiased objective approach of a realist parallels the beliefs of a conventional journalist. Merrill described the realist as someone who believes "a news story is not what is *read* (perceived) by an audience member but what is written (or otherwise transmitted by a reporter) . . . The realist focuses on objects, not on the subjects perceiving these objects." (1990, 156) The realist assumption that there is a relationship between detachment and objectivity can be traced to the very beginnings of Associated Press in the mid-1800s. Oliver Grambling, an AP reporter who chronicled the history of the Associated Press, wrote that while as a journalist he communicated facts, he was not allowed to comment on those facts. (Altschull, 1984, 129) The idea that observations and reporting about those observations without adding opinion is often compared to the scientific application of objectivity — where the scientist shall not knowingly affect the outcome of his experiments.

The comparison of the scientist to a journalist continues to be used by public journalists attempting to describe problems with objectivity and detachment. Merritt observed many institutions have implemented policies ranging from prohibiting journalists any involvement in community activities to limiting participation in an event or activity that the reporter might write about. (1998, 25) It is this version of objectivity that many journalists profess, and it is also the one public journalists claim has led to the decline of democracy.

If Merrill's realist is pessimistic, then his idealist is grounded in optimism. This view of objectivity may be defined by the words associated with it — balance, fairness and truth. (Altschull, 1984, 125) Credibility is often linked with such objectivity because the idealist appears less concerned with detachment and neutrality and accepts the journalist's presence in most stories. In addition, Merrill described the idealist as seeing news as (1) a news event "that happens in the mind of the audience member (2) a news story is the device which 'triggers' a perception (image) in the audience's mind; and (3) there is no 'news' except that which is perceived by the audience member. (1990, 156) With the idealist, the public is very much a part of the editorial process, as is the case in public journalism. In *Getting the Connections Right*, Jay Rosen observed

> the disinterested pursuit of truth, the care to ground reporting in veritable facts, the principled attempt to restrain one's own biases and avoid prejudice are core values from which the press draws practical guidance and moral strength . . . But objectivity has its weaknesses. Under its influence 'facts' tend to be placed in one category, 'opinions' or personal views in another; with this division the journalist's mind appears to be successfully mapped. (1996, 29)

Many public journalists do not use the word "objectivity" because it is identified with detachment and contrary to the premise of connections that public journalism

promotes. Objectivity also promotes balance. As Merritt and Rosen have argued, the problem with balance is that it presents two extremes and leaves the analysis to the audience. With this approach there is little to offer as a solution. As solutions are the goal of public journalism, journalists are asked to forget about detachment and balance and think of themselves as participants in civic life. Like objectivity, being a fair-minded participant, the term Merritt suggests journalists use to view themselves, has many implications. Where are lines drawn with regard to participation and should they be drawn all?

Because there will never be a widely accepted definition of objectivity, public journalists seem to find it easier to dismiss the idea than pursue any definition at all. Glasser and Craft are not as broad in their dismissal of objectivity in public journalism. They note "public journalism rejects, emphatically and categorically, any interpretation of 'objectivity' or 'objective reporting,' which holds that newsrooms must stand detached from, and disinterested in, the affairs of the community." (1998, 207) Their observation leaves room for ideas such as balance and fairness, which often are associated with objectivity. However, perhaps Merrill explained why some form of objectivity will always be present.

> It is certainly unrealistic to expect a common definition of objectivity to develop or a monolithic journalistic objectivity to emerge in the United States as long as journalists are willing and able to fight against all manners of subtle and insidious authoritarian influences which would happily define for us all the "nature" of objective journalism. (1990, 155)

Much like Merrill's belief that it is not likely a common definition of objectivity will evolve, it is equally unlikely that public journalists will find a common definition of the journalism they profess to practice. As innovative and new as public journalists

believe their public journalism is, it is apparent that public journalism may defined by many of the theories and practices of the journalism that proceeded it. Instead of focusing on how poorly journalism has been practiced previously, it would benefit public journalists to explore the journalism that did work — the journalism that connected with its intended audiences.

Chapter Three — Defining the Cowles family journalistic philosophy

Four generations of the Cowles family have affected how journalism was practiced not only in newspapers, but in broadcasting and in magazines as well. However, for the purposes of this paper, the emphasis will be placed on the newspaper accomplishments, particularly because the Cowleses believed a newspaper should be a tool to help readers identify not only with local events, but state, regional and world affairs as well. A *Saturday Review* article recognized the Cowles family as having "rejected the historic insularity of so many of their colleagues in order to turn out papers that are internationalist, cosmopolitan, humanistic and — at times — cerebral. 'A good newspaper,' says John Cowles, Sr., 'should be a university on your doorstep.' " (Furlong, 1968, 71) As such a university, the Cowles newspapers served their readership well. The following overview of the Cowles family was compiled primarily from four sources — a *Time* magazine article written in 1935 after the Cowles purchase of the Minneapolis *StarTribune*, a 1968 *Saturday Review* article detailing the family's media holdings, John Cowles Sr.'s obituary that ran in the *StarTribune*, and a 1998 book chronicling the Cowles Media Company. Collectively these articles — and the Cowles papers at Drake University — illustrate how an editor and publisher could aspire to be part of the community without disrupting the balance of the news.

Three members of the Cowles family were instrumental in establishing the framework of the Cowles philosophy. The family's involvement in journalism began when Gardner Cowles Sr. purchased *The Des Moines Register* in 1903. (Furlong, 1968, 72) Although it was the weakest of three local papers when Cowles took over, he soon

built *The Register* into a thriving paper by studying the newspaper's circulation and the proximity of communities to the railroad. At the same time he was attempting to increase circulation by expanding the geographic boundaries, he was also devoted to providing his readers a quality product. Soon, *The Register and Tribune* not only dominated local coverage, but state coverage as well.

> But the *Register & Tribune* has its State — most literate and fourth wealthiest per capita in the U.S. — sewed up tight. Reason: It gets and prints all Iowa news, and knows how to deliver it. Its 254 State correspondents report not only hot news, but every marriage and death in their communities. A single day's edition of the *Register & Tribune* may be replated as often as 20 times, to front-page news of special interest to this distant town or that remote country. ("Iowa Formula," 1935, 26)

The newspapers' success could also be attributed to Cowles' belief that a good newspaper needed to meet several criteria for continued success. The criteria were set forth as Gardner Cowles described his publishing philosophy in a 1943 *Editor & Publisher* two-article series about the Cowles family.

> My greatest hope for this institution's future is that the sense of obligation proportionate to the opportunity for service has gone along with our growth. Newspapers cannot do everything. But without good newspapers I doubt whether any people under modern conditions can preserve free institutions . . . The good newspaper must be honest, it must be fair, it must be truly efficient in every aspect of the job of delivering to a free people with the maximum speed the information by which alone they can manage their common affairs themselves as a self-governing group. (Brandenburg, 1943, 31)

As Gardner Cowles Sr. was building *The Register and Tribune* as a leading news organization, two of his sons were learning the news business. The youngest son, Gardner Jr. (Mike), was described in a 1935 *Time Magazine* article as one who "cooks up many a smart feature, directs three radio stations, which last year netted a profit of about $20,000." ("Iowa Formula," 1935, 28) For nearly a decade, Mike worked with his older

brother John running the Des Moines papers. In the same 1935 *Time Magazine* article, John was portrayed as

> no corn-fed bumpkin, no dallying rich-man's-son, inquisitive John Cowles has stored behind his thick-lensed glasses and his moon face a wealth of essential fact. An excellence of perspective on top of a sound judgment makes him one of the most important young newspaper publishers in the land. ("Iowa Formula," 1935, 26)

A further comparison of the two brothers can be drawn from the files of correspondence at Drake University. While both men were obviously intellectual, equally politically connected and at the top of their field, John appeared, on paper at least, to be the more thoughtful of the two. Time and again, ongoing conversations regarding employment issues, national and world matters, business concerns and family happenings are clearly evident, but Mike's letters were shorter, more to the point and often handwritten notes. On the other hand, John's letters were typewritten, lengthy, detailed explanations of the situation and his opinions. Often, they resembled short essays about political, national or world events.

At the time of the 1938 *Time* magazine article, the Cowles family had just purchased the *Minneapolis Star*, which at the time was the "poorest paper in town," with hopes of replicating the success of the Des Moines paper. (Furlong, 1968, 71) By 1968, the entire Cowles media holdings had grown significantly. Both the Des Moines papers and Minneapolis papers were part of a larger corporation — Cowles Communications.[6] John's portion included "newspapers in Rapid City, South Dakota, and Great Falls, Montana; a TV station in Wichita; and an interest in a Minneapolis radio-TV station."

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[6] Cowles Communications was renamed the Cowles Media Company in 1982 to reflect the company's "diversifying media business." (Alcott, 1998, 123)

(Furlong, 1968, 71) Mike was in charge of a number of newspapers, broadcast stations and special interest journals, including *LOOK* magazine.

While each may have had his individual specialties, the overall technique and style were similar enough to create uniformity throughout their diverse media holdings. In particular, "the Cowleses added an editorial policy that can variously be described as improbable and enlightened." (Furlong, 1968, 72) The family philosophy was summarized in three commandments, composed by Gardner Cowles Sr. and Harvey Ingham of *The Des Moines Register and Tribune.*

> 1. We believe in presenting ALL of the news impartially in the news columns.
> 2. We believe in expressing our own opinions as persuasively and forcefully as possible, but in confining those expressions to the editorial columns on the editorial pages.
> 3. We believe in giving our readers also the opinions of other competent writers, representing ALL SIDES of important controversial issues, so our readers can form their judgments wisely. (Brandenburg, 1943, 31)

This statement of commitment was evident in most of the Cowles holdings, but it was particularly apparent in the emphasis placed on civil rights and internationalism well before either issue was commanding widespread public or media attention. The family's commitment to both issues, as well as others, could be seen not only in their personal actions, but it was also reflected on the editorial pages.

A brief biography of John Cowles Sr.

When the 84-year-old John Cowles Sr. died on February 27, 1983, his nearly half century of public service was noted not only by his own paper but by others around the nation. *The New York Times* wrote he "built a newspaper empire in Minneapolis and used it to fight for internationalism, education and religious tolerance." (Alcott, 1998,

122) His own paper noted that he was instrumental in shaping Minnesota's journalistic, civic and political environment. (Banaszynski and Rebuffoni, 1983, 1A)

As a child, Cowles demonstrated a curiosity appropriate for a future journalist. Often accompanying his father to the *Register and Tribune* office, as well as to journalism conferences throughout the United States, Cowles showed great interest in newspapers as he asked many questions about issues and the newspaper business. ("Iowa Formula," 1935, 26) In college, Cowles was the first Harvard student to "serve simultaneously as an editor of the *Crimson*, the *Lampoon* and the *Advocate* — the college newspaper, humor magazine and literary magazine." ("A newspaperman foremost," 1983, 1A) In 1921, John Cowles returned to Des Moines to begin work as a reporter covering the Iowa Legislature, and in 1923, he completed a brief stint as a foreign correspondent in the Soviet Union as Josef Stalin was gaining power. That same year, Cowles was named vice president, general manager and an associate publisher of The *Register and Tribune*. After his brother Mike joined the papers in 1925, they shared duties until 1935 when the family purchased the *Minneapolis Star* and John and his family moved to Minneapolis. ("A newspaperman foremost," 1983, 4A)

The purchase of the *Minneapolis Star*[7] came when the mentality of Minnesota residents and the rest of the nation was significantly isolationist. Cowles, on the other

[7] Throughout the rest of this thesis, the Minneapolis paper is referred to in a number of ways, which correspond to different periods of time. After the purchase of the Minneapolis Daily Star, an evening paper, in 1935, Cowles purchased the Minneapolis Journal, a morning paper in August 1939, the papers were then known as *The Minneapolis Star Journal*. In 1941, *The Minneapolis Star Journal* merged *with The Minneapolis Tribune*, an evening paper. At this time, *The Minneapolis Tribune* became the morning paper and *The Minneapolis Star Journal* the evening paper. The two papers operated separately until 1982, when the papers are combined to create *The Star and Tribune*, an all-day morning paper. The paper changed its name to the *StarTribune* in 1987 in "recognition of its circulation and reach through the Twin Cities Metro Area." (Alcott, 1998, 233)

hand, firmly believed in internationalism. He demonstrated this not only in his newspapers, but also in his involvement in public life. He took national and international news and put it into perspective for his readers. Cowles' civic commitment extended to service on the boards of several national foundations including the Ford Foundation, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the American Assembly. As a Ford Foundation trustee, his hunger for international news and experiences was fed as he had the opportunity to meet a number of leaders, including those in India and South Asia. ("A newspaperman foremost, 1983, 4A) In addition, Cowles participated in politics and helped shape national and global policy. In the end, he "helped change the way Minnesota perceived itself and the rest of the world. And he did so not by being an aloof newspaper publisher, by through an intense, personal involvement in the state's affairs." (Banaszynski and Rebuffoni, 1983, 1A)

Education was another area to which Cowles devoted considerable time. He served as a trustee at several educational institutions including, Harvard, Carleton College, Drake University and Phillips Exeter. He was also a trustee of the Gardner Cowles Foundation created by his parents in 1933 to support educational institutions in Iowa. He and his wife also created a smaller educational foundation that aided educational and cultural institutions throughout Minnesota. ("A newspaperman foremost," 1983, 4A) In addition to John Cowles' contributions to education, the *Star and Tribune* was used to further education at a number of levels. In 1965, when college students were not looking at journalism as a potential career, the *Star* implemented a five-year $100,000 scholarship program in 50 accredited journalism schools across the nation.

Outstanding juniors were selected by deans and directors were selected to receive a $400 scholarship — no strings attached.

A 1968 *Saturday Review* article about the Cowles family inventoried the positive changes that had coincided with John Cowles' run as owner of *The Star and Tribune*. Noting the significant change in political and cultural climates, the article said "all this, of course didn't happen simply because of the Cowleses and their newspapers; it developed out of the inner dynamics of the community. But certainly the Cowleses contributed significantly to those dynamics." (Furlong, 1968, 72)

John Cowles Sr.'s impact as a citizen and a community leader was cited by many. A friend offered perhaps the most fitting tribute at the time of Cowles' retirement in 1974. It summarizes how effective the Cowles approach to journalism had been in Minneapolis.

> I can't let the occasion of your retirement go by without commenting on the great leadership which you have given to the community over the years. You have been a magnificent citizen. You have been out in front of every worthwhile effort that has made Minneapolis the most attractive and interesting city in the country. You built a newspaper that ranked as one of the best in the nation and which was instrumental in pressing the community to move forward as boldly as it has. You coupled your leadership with exemplary generosity. (Inskip, 1983, 2A)

An examination of John Cowles personal papers at the Cowles Library at Drake University supports this observation. In fact, the files show a man whose counsel was sought by many, but who was able to remain respectful in giving advice. For example, Cowles served as an advisor to Wendell Willkie, but it is Cowles' correspondence with President Dwight D. Eisenhower that was particularly revealing. At one point Cowles encouraged Eisenhower to run for president, but he suggested Eisenhower determine whether he could conclude his business in Europe and make a full commitment to

campaigning. Once Eisenhower decided to move ahead in his bid for the presidency, Cowles continued to offer advice, although the advice had a respectful tone. The following letter of February 14, 1952, is littered with "I believes" and "I suggests" that clearly demonstrate Cowles deferring to Eisenhower's judgment, although the salutation indicated Cowles did know Eisenhower on a personal basis.

Dear Ike:

The campaign for your nomination seems to me to be rolling along well.

I hope you will not think me presumptuous for offering a few suggestions as to your course after you return to the U.S.

1. I think it would be wiser for you to resign your army commission immediately after you make your report to President Truman rather than to say that you will resign it after you have been nominated.

2. It is psychologically important, I believe, that you not use any government plane after you have made your report to Truman, regardless of whether you have resigned your commission or have simply gone on an inactive status. I think it would be far better for you to fly from Washington to Abilene and from there to Denver in a chartered commercial airline plane rather than to go in either a government plane or in any corporation or private individual's plane.

3. In both your Abilene speech and at your press conference the day following, I hope you will stress your belief that government spending can be substantially reduced through more competent management and greater emphasis on economy, including specifically the reduction of waste in the military establishment. I think it would be helpful if you would say that you are convinced from your own personal knowledge that a lot of money can be saved in the defense effort without impairing national security. I also suggest that you say that if you are elected you intend to appoint a group of top business men who have had military experience or have worked with the armed services (individuals like General Wood of Sears-Roebuck, Ford Eberstadt, and Lucius Clay) to see to it that waste and duplication are to the maximum possible degree eliminated from the defense establishment, and that you will see to it that their recommendations are put into effect along with many other economics that you personally intend to see are made.

4. In your Abilene speech I suggest that you emphasize that you don't pretend to know all the answers on relatively minor but highly complicated domestic political issues, but that in due course you will decide your position on them after study and consultation with members of Congress and outside qualified experts, within the framework of your broad political philosophy which you will have made clear in your Abilene speech. Obviously, at every press conference you will be asked questions designed to embarrass you. If you have made it clear at Abilene that you have not yet had time to study all the issues and that you are not going to take positions on some things until after study, conferences, and mature deliberation, you can decline to answer many questions without that fact hurting your prospects. I think candor and frankness along this line would appeal to the people and disarm some critics.

5. As to FEPC, I suggest you read Adlai Stevenson's recent statement, which I thought sound and superb. It apparently satisfied, to a large degree, both white southerners and northern Negroes,

With warm regards, (Cowles, 1952, File 10-1)

Other correspondence offered additional glimpses of Cowles both personally and professionally. The letters indicated a businessman constantly looking for new talent. It was not unusual for him to discuss with Mike a journalist he had met and where that person might fit into the Cowles organization. In letters to other family members, Cowles' political and social connections were evident as he often recounted stories with high ranking officials, diplomats and other policymakers. The files also revealed a detail-oriented man. Besides the sheer volume of files filling the sixteen filing cabinets housing Cowles' personal files at Drake University, the contents also attest to this. If Cowles was traveling when correspondence arrived, his secretary would send a note explaining Cowles was out of town. When he returned, he would answer the letter, and once again it would be a lengthy and complete response.

Overall, the contents of the files at Drake's Cowles Library provided a detailed sketch of a thoughtful, intelligent businessman who contributed not only to journalism but the policy decisions of the nation.

Chapter Four — Analysis

Within the public journalism debate, the question is asked whether the core beliefs that drive the movement are new or if they are deeply rooted traditional beliefs. As Glasser and Craft noted, this uncertainty exists

> because public journalism emerged without a clearly articulated political philosophy, considerable confusion persists about what, precisely, democracy means and what counts as democratic participation . . . public journalism seems unsure about which version it wants to embrace and which democratic norms it therefore wants to endorse. Nowhere is this uncertainty and confusion more apparent than in public journalism's grand but vague commitment to improving the quality of public discourse. (1998, 211)

With this call to improve the quality of public discourse, many public journalists appear to be asking for a radical overhaul of the entire profession. The status of a public journalist seemingly depends on his willingness to focus less on such widely held traditional journalism values such as objectivity, fairness and balance. In the eyes of the public journalist, these beliefs encourage detachment from the community and ultimately are destructive to open discourse. Or, as Glasser and Craft quote Jay Rosen: " 'Traditional journalism worries about getting the separations right. Public journalism is about trying to get the connections right.' " (1998, 203)

There have been journalists, however, who believed in the ideas of objectivity, balance and fairness and still found ways to contribute to the community and encourage public debate. From the 1930s through the 1970s, John Cowles Sr. demonstrated how a journalist and a newspaper could be involved in the community while striving to maintain objectivity, fairness and balance. To Cowles, community involvement, objectivity, including fairness and balance, were all interconnected and necessary to providing quality

news coverage. He also believed the public needed to understand the information his papers were providing. He knew the newspaper needed to connect with its audience in much the same manner public journalists claim is vital to do today.

As the public journalism debate continues there is a need to examine what kind of journalism has been effective in the past. John Cowles Sr.'s contributions to his community and journalism provide ample and valuable information necessary for a case study. During his more than 50-year tenure as publisher and owner of the *StarTribune*, the newspaper was often recognized by industry journals as among the best in the nation. In addition, his personal files in the Drake University Cowles Library provide insight into the life of a man who sought to improve public life by improving journalistic standards. Within these files are copies of correspondence he sent to friends, family, national decision-makers, as well as the newsmakers of the time. There are copies of correspondence sent to Cowles seeking his counsel about national and international matters. Drafts and final bound copies of the many speeches he gave are also found in these files, as well as his own clipping files with highlights and notes in the margins. All of these files served to provide background and insight into Cowles' life. The material has been used for other research projects, including a paper by a Drake graduate student that focused on Cowles' relationship with Paul Hoffman of the Ford Foundation. Dr. Herb Strentz, a professor of journalism at Drake University, has used the files for a number of projects including an examination of Cowles' relationship with Wendell Willkie.

Much of the content supports the claim that public journalism is fundamentally rooted in the traditional ethics and practices of journalism. From the breadth of material

available in the files of John Cowles Sr., his speeches provide particular insight into the beliefs that helped shape the way he governed his newspapers, which is the reason they were chosen to be carefully analyzed. In particular, this thesis focuses on six speeches and one book chapter written by Cowles. They were chosen because they span the decades in which Cowles was directly influencing journalism as journalist, publisher and owner. The content demonstrates several of the themes that Cowles often addressed including, the importance of community involvement, fairness and objectivity, international relations, and civil rights. The following Cowles speeches chosen for this study are listed chronologically.

An overview of the speeches.

(1) "The American Newspaper." Written for publication in 1938, this chapter was part of *America Now*, a book edited by Harold E. Stearns and published by Charles Scribner's Sons. (see Appendix A) This book chapter clearly demonstrates Cowles' understanding of journalism and its trends. It also summarized the role of the American newspaper in society, and the increasing importance of fairness and objectivity.

Cowles opened the chapter noting recent attacks on the integrity of newspapers throughout the United States. Instead of outlining his own opinions on this matter, Cowles sought to show how newspapers had changed in recent years. "Believers in the theory of economic interpretation of all events will find much to support their views, but, at the same time, more than a little to refute them." (Cowles File 1,1)

Noting the difference between newspapers of earlier generations and those of the early 20th century, Cowles observed, "cities large and small had many papers. They

started and flourished or languished and died. There was a voice for every opinion . . . Few attempted either to print all the news or to print it impartially and objectively, as our more responsible papers try to do today." (Cowles, File 1,1) Then, like other industries, newspapers became fewer and those that remained grew stronger and more concentrated.

Cowles drew a comparison between this trend and the increased volume of the advertising volume.

> During the first three decades of the twentieth century advertising volume grew enormously in America, along with the merchandising of goods on a national scale and the accelerated trend toward larger business units. The increased income that the newspaper received from this development in advertising enabled them greatly to extend their news-gathering facilities and improve their product, provided them with the revenue with which to add "features" — comic strips and serial stories and all the other things that the average person prefers to serious, heavy news." (Cowles, File 1,1)

Cowles noted although advertising revenue was large portion of a newspaper's overall revenue it was also tied directly circulation.

Cowles also addressed the decline in the number of daily newspapers. Cowles named a number of cities that had just a morning and afternoon paper that were typically owned by the same people and attempted to dispel the prevailing concern that if the current trend of disappearing newspapers continued there would only be a few owners responsible for the distribution of news. Instead he argued that

> as the successful operation of a newspaper in a competitive field depends so largely upon the quality of its management and its ability to keep in tune with the town, being neither too far ahead of nor behind the local mores, a newspaper cannot be successfully operated like a branch of a mass production factory. (Cowles, File 1,1)

Cowles felt it was important to discuss the business portion of the newspaper industry to understand how a newspaper operated.

> The explanation is simple. Those newspapers that are competitively the strongest not only have the financial means to give their readers a superior product, but — other things being equal — naturally have the greater editorial independence and are the less susceptible to pressure or venality. (Cowles, File 1,1)

As Cowles explored the history of the publishers, he noted that publishers and editors had to move away from putting their opinion in the news columns and become fairer and more balanced in their presentation of the news.

> It began to dawn on the newspaper owners that they had a big education job ahead of them in order to make it clear that a free press is not simply a publisher's selfish privilege but a public heritage, and that newspapers should conduct themselves so that the average citizens would realize that freedom of the press was a matter of vital importance to him — not simply license for a publication owner to do with as he wished. (Cowles, File 1,1)

Cowles noted that most newspapers had begun clearly dividing opinion from the news stories. However, he noted two well-known publishers who were known to inject their opinions into the news columns — Colonel R.R. McCormick of the *Chicago Tribune* and William Randolph Hearst. Cowles' example of these two publishers was important because as the "two most important out of an extremely small group of metropolitan publishers who do not regard press freedom as an obligation to keep their news columns uncontaminated by their personal convictions or prejudices were put into the spotlight as representatives of the views of all publishers." (Cowles, File 1,1) Cowles also acknowledged complete objectivity is not always an option. "Democratic government cannot keep functioning unless the newspapers do their part of the job: inform people about what is happening. Sometimes it is impossible to inform without expressing opinions because there is no proof as to what is fact and what isn't." (Cowles, File 1,1)

Cowles concluded his chapter by noting the current attacks on journalism should not be taken lightly. In fact, they should be used to further the profession because as

capitalistic enterprises their shortcomings were "directly traceable to the fact that their private profit motive sometimes conflicts with their public obligation to print all the news, and print it fairly and objectively." (Cowles, File 1,1)

(2) "What a Newspaper Publisher Wants from His Promotion Department Today." This particular speech was given to the American Newspaper Publishers Association (ANPA) Convention in New York City on April 24, 1944. (see Appendix B) Cowles discussed the financial responsibilities facing newspapers at this time, as well as the overall social responsibility of newspapers.

As the title indicates, Cowles believed the promotions department was important to the newspaper's community relations and overall identity. He identified the basic problem facing the promotions department as " 'How Can We Make the General Public and Our Newspaper Better and Appreciate Increasingly What It is Doing and Can Do for Them?' " A promotions department Cowles believed "is or should be a general utility department designed to assist and supplement all of the other departments in the performance of their respective functions; and give them constructive ideas and suggestions that will help them do their own particular jobs better." (Cowles, File 1,2) In addition, Cowles believed there was no other place to get an overall picture of the news organization.

Cowles suggested the promotions department form relationships with other departments that would create trust in the research they performed. For example, Cowles said reader surveys would allow newspapers to better understand what the public was reading and not reading. If there was low readership, editors and publishers might be able to determine whether it should be attributed to content, or typographical treatment.

A good promotions department should always be looking for ways to be involved in the community. One example Cowles cited was postwar planning.

> Why shouldn't your newspaper promotion department step in, dig out the facts, and make recommendations to your editors or publishers as to things that your paper should do both to coordinate the plans of various independent agencies and also to take community leadership in postwar planning among all the private and business groups?" (Cowles, File 1,2)

Cowles posed several other questions designed to help publishers realize where the promotions department could provide assistance. These questions included: "Are you increasing, each successive year, the public's realization that your newspaper is an essential community necessity and asset, and that, in proportion to its value, the cost that a reader pays for your paper is trivial? Isn't this properly the concern of your promotion department?" (Cowles, File 1,2)

In addition, Cowles discussed the decline of newspaper advertising volume. He suggested the creation of newspaper networks where advertising would be sold "as a unit in specific groups of publications, in one large package having many millions of circulation." (Cowles, File 1,2) Such a system, Cowles reasoned, would allow an advertiser to make a greater impact nationally.

Overall Cowles concluded:

> Anything that makes the public or the advertiser like a newspaper better or appreciate more deeply the service that it is rendering is properly within the functions of a promotion manager. My final words to you are simply these: learn all you can about all phases of your newspaper's operations, cooperate with all that will benefit your publication, regardless of what they may be. In that way you will be doing the things that newspaper publishers do want, or should want, their promotion department to do. (Cowles, File 1,2)

(3) "The Responsibility of a Free Press in a World in Crisis." Cowles delivered this speech at the University of Missouri's School of Journalism on May 4, 1951, where

he received a Missouri Medal for Distinguished Service to Journalism. Once again, internationalism and social responsibility were key themes, but he also addressed the need to connect with readers in a world of change. In particular, Cowles saw color television as becoming the "nation's most powerful single instrument for mass transmission of ideas and entertainment." (Cowles, File 1,1) Cowles saw other areas of communication also expanding — radio, book publishing and specialized journals — but he also saw newspaper's role growing as well.

All of this meant, Cowles believed, that as the average American

> became better educated and also acquired access to far more numerous sources of information and opinion than before, most newspapers put increased emphasis on making their news columns objective and unbiased. Newspapers generally ceased being mouthpieces for a political party or an economic group. The public responded to this better journalism by giving to those papers that tried to present the news honestly and fully and accurately and impartially increased circulation and increased advertising patronage. (Cowles, File 1,1)

As in many of his other speeches, Cowles addressed the need for a fair and unbiased press, to which he attributed the continued growth of newspaper circulation and advertising circulation to these practices. He observed that the commitment to these practices occurred at all levels — copy editors, reporters and sub-editors.

Again, Cowles stressed that those who claimed the newspaper decline throughout the nation was jeopardizing the freedom of the press were missing several significant points. One, "publishers and editors have, I believe, a deeper feeling of responsibility because they are alone in their field." Two, those newspapers that are not in hotly competitive field are better able to resist the constant pressure to oversensationalize the news, to play up the cheap crime or sex story, to headline the story that will sell the most copies instead of another story that is actually far more important." Third, "newspapers

in single ownership cities can be, and usually are, less inhibited about correcting their errors adequately." Fourth, a newspaper, "if they are to be economically self sustaining, simply must be edited to interest and serve all the people, not just one class." (Cowles, File 1,1)

Another area of social responsibility Cowles discussed including the establishment of an agency to examine how the press is performing. Specifically, Cowles observed:

> We in Minneapolis have given a lot of thought to the possibility of creating an independent agency that would continuously examine how well the Minneapolis newspapers were performing their functions and fulfilling their obligations to the people of the Upper Midwest. We would be happy to publish the full reports of such an agency, detailing its opinions as to our specific sins of omission or commission. The great difficulty that has so far thwarted our setting up such an agency is the finding of competent personnel in whom the general reading public would have complete confidence and who would, at the same time, know the practical problems and difficulties of metropolitan newspaper operations. (Cowles, File 1,1)

Cowles concluded this speech addressing the need for more interpretive news, particularly from newspapers, as the overall number of communications channels increased. "People will want more background information. People will want not only the bare facts of what did happen yesterday but will want from their newspapers information on what is probably going to happen tomorrow or next week or next month." (Cowles, File 1,1) Ultimately, Cowles believed this meant there would be better reporters, editors and publishers.

(4) "The International Crisis and What We Should Do About It." This speech was prepared for the annual meeting of the Associated Harvard Clubs in Rochester, New York on May 15, 1954. Similar to the previous speech, Cowles addressed

internationalism and social responsibility. He also stressed the need for the public to be involved in issues affecting democracy.

Cowles summarized the international situation at the time of this speech as "complex" and "grave." He also saw them as long-term plans. In addition, he observed,

> I think we can all agree on the purpose of our foreign policy. It is simply to preserve American freedom and security. We want to preserve our freedom without war if possible. If war should prove inevitable, then our foreign policy should have been so directed that we would be in position to win that war. (Cowles, File 1,1)

With this statement, Cowles moved into a discussion about the present condition of the nation and what he thought should be done.

Cowles' key points included:

- A successful foreign policy depended on a strong system of alliances.
- The United States needed to recognize Red China as a world power because other countries had.
- The United States needed to work with India and Nehru to prevent the spread of communism.

In conclusion, Cowles charged

> that the American people and the Congress re-examine, in the light of the gravity of the international situation, some of our present political and economic positions with a view toward modifying them so that we can attain a firmer solidarity between ourselves and the rest of the free world, namely our potential allies. (Cowles, File 1,1)

(5) "The Future of American Newspapers." At the Sigma Delta Chi national convention on November 11, 1954, Cowles said the media should be involved in their communities and focused on the future of newspapers. (see Appendix C)

As in many of his previous speeches, Cowles addressed the business side of newspapers and its ties to fairness and objectivity. "A principal factor in raising the standards of the press has been that the press has become in large measure independent in its ownership and financially sound." (Cowles, File 1,1) The increased standards were important because "people soon sense whether or not a newspaper is being edited in the public's interest. If it is not, its patronage is likely to be scanty, and operating costs have become so large that the maintenance for selfish reasons of a continuously heavy loser is a luxury few can afford." (Cowles, File 1,1)

He also discussed the prevailing concern that as there were fewer newspapers there were greater concerns about media monopolies. Cowles did not see fewer newspapers creating monopolies and damage to the credibility of the news industry. Instead he believed there was a chance for a better quality product. "Editors and publishers of newspapers in non-competitive fields generally have, I am convinced, a deeper feeling of their responsibilities and obligations to their communities and readers because of the very absence of competition." (Cowles, File 1,1)

Cowles also discussed the importance of public attitudes and readership surveys. Cowles believed these surveys proved that even in "so-called monopoly cities newspapers can win public confidence." (Cowles, File 1,1) Public confidence was key to Cowles.

> Evidence of increased public confidence in the integrity and fairness of the press is, it seems to me, of far more importance than the fact that newspapers carried more dollars of advertising revenue in 1953 than ever before, or that combined total circulations of all U.S. papers are at or near their all time highs. (Cowles, File 1,1)

This observation was of significance because Cowles studied the circulation numbers not only of his paper, but those around the nation. In his speech he noted circulation had been declining at newspapers that did not "regard full and fair news presentation as their primary function and reason for existence." (Cowles, File 1,1) Cowles also said those publications dedicated to fairness and objectivity saw increases in circulation.

He drew three other conclusions from the circulation numbers. One, "the growth of television watching has reduced the relative appeal of mine-run entertainment features." Two, "that because of the rapidly rising educational level of the American public and its steadily widening range of interests, those newspapers that were built largely on the formula of sex and crime sensationalism plus entertainment features no longer adequately satisfy all the interests which the reader wants satisfied." Three, "over the long pull a newspaper's editorials exert influence with its readers in pretty direct proportion to the degree of confidence that the readers have in the paper's fairness in presenting the news." (Cowles, File 1,1)

Cowles concluded this speech by observing that in addition to "complete and unbiased news reports, people will want more interpretive news and background information. The relative importance of editorial writers will, I think, increase." In addition, he said "if a newspaper is staffed by men of high professional competence whose basic journalistic philosophy is similar, the newspaper is better if the team is driven with loose reins." Overall, Cowles believed for newspapers the future was brighter than the past.

(6) "A Glimpse at the Future." This was a commencement speech given at the University of Rochester that focused on the need for the public to participate in democracy. It was presented on June 7, 1959.

Noting that the country had changed more significantly in the past 20 years than it had in the previous century, Cowles said the country was facing a number of challenges. But, he believed that they would be surmountable "if the people of the United States are sufficiently informed to understand the nature and dimensions of the problems, and are sufficiently open minded to modify their past convictions in the light of new facts." (Cowles, File 1,2) From there, Cowles stated "we must reexamine our past opinions and policies in the light of these new scientific and political and economic and social facts to see if they are now realistic." (Cowles, File 1,2)

One of the national priorities Cowles believed was "survival with freedom." To do so, many ideas needed to be rethought. First, he said the concept of national sovereignty needed to be examined. Cowles thought the world had grown too global for this ideal. Second, he urged the nation to look at Thomas Jefferson's statement that a "government is best which governs least." Instead, he said under the current circumstances that a "government is best that governs best."

Overall, Cowles believed America was moving in the right direction. "The genius of the United States has been that we have not stuck rigidly to theoretical or classical political philosophy, but have done the things that the people became convinced needed to be done." (Cowles, File 1,2) Cowles then discussed raising taxes to balance the budget, curbing the exploding world population as well as building and maintaining nuclear capability.

In conclusion, Cowles challenged the graduates to play an effective role in shaping history. However, he noted they were better educated and better prepared to deal with the increasing problems facing future generations.

(7) "The Newspaper Is a Strange Animal" was presented to the Twin Cities Harvard Business School Club on September 24, 1963. (see Appendix D) In this speech, Cowles observed:

> the newspaper is a strange animal because it is a mixture of a business and a profession, and at times there appear to be conflicts between what might seem expedient if the decision were to be based solely on short-run business advantages rather than on professional standards and intellectual convictions. (Cowles, File 1,1)

Cowles outlined the many reasons that "the newspaper is a strange animal." Overall, the speech clearly laid out how the Cowles journalistic philosophy had created a media giant. Beginning on the business side, Cowles demonstrated the complexity of the newspaper business by citing numbers. Cowles argued that newspapers were nothing more than sales and manufacturing organizations that produced completely different products each day. At the time the *StarTribune* Company was doing about $40 million of business a year, of which advertising provided two-thirds of the revenue. The paper hired more than 15,000 people to distribute the paper, of which 13,500 were boys. The paper employed 2,400 people, of whom two-thirds were employed full-time. The total payroll, excluding commissions, exceeded $1 million each month. In addition, the paper carried 1.5 million separate want ads in that year, with more than 10,000 in a single Sunday paper.

Expense was not spared on the editorial side. More than $3 million was spent on the news and editorial departments to purchase the services of the Associated Press and the United Press International, as well as the news services of The New York Times,

Chicago Daily News, New York Herald-Tribune, Dow Jones and Reuters. In addition, the newspaper maintained a five-man Washington, D.C., bureau and two foreign correspondents.

After discussing the numbers, Cowles moved his discussion of newspapers to the editorial side by outlining his belief of what a newspaper should do. "A newspaper has several completely different functions. Its primary purpose, of course, is to present the news so that its readers will know what is happening in their local community, their state, nation and the rest of the world." (Cowles, File 1,1) Cowles noted this was done by "keeping the news columns completely fair and objective." (Cowles, File 1,1) Cowles contended fairness and objectivity were present in the coverage of political candidates. In fact, he believed "it is misleading to judge a newspapers coverage of a political campaign on the basis of one day's or a few day's issues." (Cowles, File 1,1)

Within this function of the newspaper Cowles discussed how difficult it can be serve the interests of the readers. "We do try to serve the highest common denominator of our readers' interest, and we are constantly trying to raise the level of that common denominator." (Cowles, File 1,1) Serving the readers also meant educating them. Cowles was proud that both the *Star* and *Tribune* employed reporters who specialized in science, religion and education.

Another function of the newspaper was to "attempt to lead and influence public opinion by persuading our readers to make what we regard as sound judgments on the issues confronting the community, state and nation." (Cowles, File 1,1) Beyond the news columns and editorial pages, Cowles said it was important for the executives had an

"obligation to work actively in the support of major projects that will improve Minneapolis and the Upper Midwest."

The third function of the newspaper was to "foster commerce and industry through its advertising columns." Demonstrating his broad knowledge of the newspaper industry and its trends, Cowles said that during the newspaper strike in the spring and summer of 1962 almost all types of business activity declined. "The Federal Reserve figures indicate that the same thing happened in Cleveland and in New York City during their long newspaper strikes." (Cowles, File 1,1)

In the final section of his speech, Cowles discussed the conflicts between the business and professional sides of the newspaper. Cowles generally believed there were few conflicts, but if there were problems there were two sources.

> First, from advertising customers who may try to put pressure on a newspaper to suppress or minimize or distort some news story with a veiled threat that they may reduce or eliminate their advertising patronage if the newspaper does not comply, or from organized pressure groups, whether economic or political or religious, who threaten that large number of subscribers will stop taking the paper or boycott its advertisers unless the paper adopts the editorial position or follows news practices that the pressure group favors or refrains from printing editorials criticizing it. (Cowles, File 1,1)

Cowles said both pressures had decreased, particularly as newspapers adhered to professional principles and integrity. Cowles outlined the newspapers' policies including examples of where the newspaper withstood the pressure applied by advertisers or influential citizens and won. For example, the newspaper had a policy about printing the names of people arrested for drunken driving. Cowles said initially people called pleading they had family members with weak hearts would not be able to withstand the public humiliation of seeing their name in the newspaper. After a while, the public

apparently deemed this "acceptable" journalism and there are few calls requesting suppression of names.

Overall, Cowles said

> we make many, many mistakes in news and editorial judgment and in news handling, but we try to give the people of Minneapolis and the Upper Midwest the whole picture, not just that which we see through our spectacles which you may think are philosophically tinted by one color or another. (Cowles, File 1,1)

In addition to the above pieces, three additional pieces provided significant framework in which to analyze Cowles' overall journalistic philosophy.

(8) "Glimpses of the Soviet Union" was a series of articles John Cowles Sr. wrote for The *Des Moines Register* in September and October 1923. The series put the international happenings in perspective for *Register* readers. Cowles continued to write news accounts like this on his foreign trips. Of particular note, would be the series he wrote when he accompanied Wendell Willkie to England. In addition, the Minneapolis *StarTribune* would carry similar series by reporters on staff.

Some of the key points Cowles made in his series include the following. Typically each point was explained with an incident Cowles experienced on his trip. The stories were written so that readers could draw comparisons and contrasts between their own lives and those of the Russians under their new government.

- Many people were curious about the new government in Russia. Cowles noted Russia and bolshevism were difficult to understand. Everyone had different interpretations.
- Admission into Russia was erratic, even if someone had legitimate business and reasons for being in the country.

- Moscow was slowly experiencing a rebirth.
- "In just the way the compactly organized political machines in America have controlled party caucuses, railroaded the selection of hand picked slates of delegates, and ruled conventions, the communist party is running Russia." (Cowles, File 1,1)
- Within a country that once could be described as religious, Cowles observed the communists were decidedly anti-religious. The government had issued many restrictions including ones that "forbade (the church) to conduct schools or engage in charitable work." (Cowles, File 1,1)
- "There is no freedom of the press, as we understand the term, in Russia. All publications are either governmental or controlled by the communist party." (Cowles, File 1,1)
- Another area of concern to Cowles was education.

  What about the children in Russia? . . . Three impressions from all the schools I saw stand out vividly: First — The remarkably keen enthusiasm of both students and teachers toward their work. Second — The pitiful scarcity of text books, apparatus, and proper physical equipment for education. Third — The apparent practicality and reality of the subjects studied and the manner of teaching." (Cowles, File 1,1)

- Cowles concluded his series with the following observation:

  The bolshevist government is strong and growing steadily stronger. Its administration of Russia's internal affairs is constantly improving. It has the aggressive backing of a powerful army and an overwhelming majority of the city workers. The bulk of the peasants, if not actively favorable to the present regime, are at least tolerably satisfied. The bolshevist government is going to last; almost no one who has recently been to Russia doubts that.

  But to what extent bolshevism can develop and benefit Russia no one can foretell. A great people, possessed of many of the best racial qualities the

> world has known, and a country fabulously rich in untapped wealth are in the bolshevists' hands. The raw material is excellent but the difficulties are colossal. What will be the eventual outcome of the experiment? Only time will tell. (Cowles, File 1,1)

(9) "Let's Launch an American Peace Offensive" was a *LOOK* magazine article published on October 9, 1951. Again, it demonstrated Cowles' focus on international issues. It also closely followed the speeches he was giving around the same time period.

This particular speech outlined why it was important to be aware of what was happening in the world. He opened his speech with a discussion about the present international situation, which he had seen first-hand in a trip to Western Europe, the Near East, Pakistan, Hong Kong and Tokyo.

> Many highly intelligent Europeans and Asians, individuals who loathe Russian totalitarianism and believe completely in the democratic ideal, fear that through ineptness the United States is going to blunder into war with Russia, or that we will become so provoked at Russia's exasperating conduct that we will ourselves precipitate war.
>
> It is difficult for Americans who have not recently talked with political and intellectual leaders in Europe and Asia to realize how widespread this view is. After circling the globe, I am convinced that American foreign policy needs to be clarified and amplified. (Cowles, File 1,1)

Cowles argued most Americans wanted peace and that should be reflected in the foreign policy. At that time, Cowles believed that the United States had moved away from actively promoting peace throughout the world, which gave the impression that "America has deserted her traditional role as a non-aggressive, peace-loving nation." (Cowles, File 1,1) In fact, he observed that Russia had been monopolizing the subject of peace, and it was time for the United States to go on a "peace offensive."

The peace offensive would include a worldwide disarmament. Cowles acknowledged this would take an "elaborate system of international inspection and control" similar to one the Russians had rejected a few years before in connection with atomic control. However, this would important in demonstrating "if Russia refused the American offer, and kept refusing it, as she probably would, then the world would be repeatedly reminded that it is Russia which is the aggressor and war monger." (Cowles, File 1,1)

Cowles said another problem with America's foreign policy was that "when World War II ended we did not publicly proclaim that our sympathies lay with the Asians, and that the United States was as desirous of seeing an end to European colonialism and exploitation as were the Asians themselves." (Cowles, File 1,1) Cowles encouraged the United States to reexamine the policy because it was doing damage to America's image abroad. He observed India had better relations with Britain, her former ruler, than with the United States.

Ultimately, Cowles believed all of this was necessary to maintain balance throughout Europe and Asia and prevent Russia from "overrunning" the entire continent both politically and economically. In the meantime, it would be important to "consider with open minds some of the criticisms that many European and Asian political and intellectual leaders are making of our current policies. It is possible that all wisdom does not reside in the U.S.A." (Cowles, File 1,1)

(10) "Freedom of the Press and the Search for Truth" was written in December 1952 for *Minnesota*, the University of Minnesota alumni magazine, and addressed the

need for a free press, as well as providing a limited history of journalism during the past 30 years. Once again, this article echoed many of the themes in his speeches.

Cowles opened his article noting the demise of the Argentine newspaper, *La Prensa*. Flags at newspapers around the country flew at half-mast in observance of the newspaper's death. Cowles posed a number of questions, including why Americans should be concerned about this.

> *La Prensa* had been great because it functioned in the noblest traditions of a free press. It stood for freedom of information, for an unfettered expression of opinion, for a courageous insistence on truth. And when *La Prensa* died, a light went out. The people of Argentina were less secure in their liberties. They were less aware of the world about them, less certain of the issues which touched their daily lives, less capable of judging the acts and policies of those who governed them. (Cowles, File 1,1)

Cowles believed that numerous times throughout history it had had been proved that a free society needed a free newspaper to endure. "Newspapers not only help to build a strong defense against tyrannical and arbitrary governments. They serve, as well, to safeguard the integrity of government and to expose the presence of corrupting poisons." (Cowles, File 1,1)

Cowles concluded that where there is freedom of the press

> men have always felt more secure in their rights, and the governments have always served their people responsibly. When the light dies, as it has far too often in the past decade, a free society has no choice. It must drift inevitably, in any nation so deprived, toward fear and ignorance and slavery. (Cowles, Files 1,1)

Other resources.

In addition to analyzing the speeches, articles and book chapter, issues of the *Minneapolis Tribune* during the weeks surrounding the speeches chosen for this paper indicated the topics of the speeches were often reflected in the newspaper. The stories

and articles on the front pages and editorial pages of the three days before the date of the speech, three days after the speech and the day of the speech were examined to determine if the content of Cowles' speeches was reflected in news coverage.

To supplement the material found in the files, interviews were scheduled with four individuals. In late May 1998, interviews were conducted with David Kruidenier and John Cowles Jr. Kruidenier, a nephew of John Cowles Sr., joined the Des Moines Register and Tribune Company in 1952 and became vice president and general manager in 1960. For the Register and Tribune Company, he was chief executive officer from 1971-1985, president and publisher from 1971-1978, and chairman and publisher from 1978-1983. In addition, he became a director of the Cowles Media Company (formerly Minneapolis Star and Tribune Company) in 1972, and was chief executive officer from 1983-84, president in 1983 and chairman of the board from 1984-1993. (Alcott, 1998, 242)

John Cowles Jr. was editor of the Minneapolis *Star* and *Tribune* from 1961-1969. He served as a director of the Cowles Media Company from 1956-1984, chief executive officer from 1968-1983 and chairman of the board from 1973-1979. (Alcott, 1998, 241) Much like his father, his list of service on community boards and committees is extensive.

In August 1998, Morley Cowles Ballantine was interviewed. As John Cowles Sr.'s daughter she was able to provide insight into the overall Cowles family journalistic philosophy. She is editor of the *Durango Herald* in Colorado.

James Alcott, who wrote *A History of the Cowles Media Company*, was interviewed in September 1998. In addition to writing the book, Alcott "joined the

Cowles Media Company in 1975 as president of *Harper's* magazine. He was vice president of the Cowles Media Company from 1978-1996, responsible, at different times, for planning, administration, corporate communications and the contributions program. He was chairman of Cowles Media Foundation from 1993-1996." (Alcott, 1998, ix)

Chapter Five — Methodology

After the initial information about Cowles was gathered, the next step was to analyze the Cowles speeches in the context of contemporary public journalism. The analysis was performed using a side-by-side comparison of public journalism to conventional journalism. (Charity, 1995, 10)

Public journalism as it's practiced differs from newspaper to newspaper, but the journalists who do the practicing seem to have strong similarities in temperament. Jay Rosen, the director of the Project on Public Life and the Press (a networking organization for public journalists), contrasts the attitudes of conventional and public journalists along the following lines. It's worthwhile noting that many of the best journalists profiled in this book started out in column 2 and found their way to column 1.

Public journalists believe:	Conventional journalists believe:
Something basic has to change, because journalism isn't working now.	The traditions of journalism are fine; if anything needs to improve, it's the practice.
In such a climate, experimentation and creativity are imperative; old habits, however, "sacred," may have to go — though change must always be guided by ethical core values and an understanding of how democracy works.	Experimentation threatens to cross the line into unethical behavior, bias and carelessness about standards. Besides, experimentation is usually a synonym for fad.
Citizens may well want to participate more intelligently in public life, but they find too many hurdles in their way.	The media and political life provide ample opportunity to participate; if people stay out or merely complain, it's their own choice.
Citizens deserve a bigger place in the newspaper itself. Papers should never "dumb down,' but must reorient themselves around citizens' concerns.	News is a profession; journalists write newspapers, readers don't. Inviting citizens to judge what's news, making them the subject of coverage and the like are inherently dumbing down — a form of pandering.
'Public life should work and journalism has a role in making it work.	It would be nice if public life worked, but it's beyond our role to make it work and it's dangerous to think we can.

For this paper, Rosen's comparisons were divided into the five sections noted above and the Cowles information was selected to fit into the appropriate sections, each section written as a short essay to address the concerns brought up in Rosen's statements.

Cowles and Public Journalism.

Public Journalism: Something basic has to change, because journalism isn't working now.

Conventional Journalism: The traditions of journalism are fine; if anything needs to improve, it's the practice.

Central to the public journalism movement is the belief that journalism must be changed to save democracy from further decay. Public journalists have promoted change particularly with regard to the demise of objectivity and balance. Many public journalists claim the problems with journalism today stem from the ideas of objectivity and fairness because they promote a sterile detachment that prevents journalists from being a fair-minded participant in their communities. (Merritt, 1998, 95) The call to reevaluate the role of objectivity and balance in journalism, is another extension of a long-running debate. For John Cowles Sr. objectivity and balance were necessary to providing a quality news product.

While Cowles did not see objectivity and balance as obstacles, throughout his speeches it was evident that Cowles recognized change was inevitable and that journalism itself needed to change if it were to continue to serve the public's interest. For Cowles, change primarily centered on serving the public first and serving the advertisers second. In a 1943 *Editor & Publisher* article, Cowles said, " 'The important thing about a publication is its editorial content and how it is distributed . . . It is better to improve the

editorial content and then to sell it aggressively.' " (Brandenburg, 1943, 27) In several speeches including "The newspaper is a strange animal" and "The responsibility of the free press in a world in crisis" Cowles addressed the rising costs of producing a newspaper and the challenges this created. For the most part, he argued that if the readers were happy, then the business of being a newspaper — advertising revenue — would likely follow. In "The newspaper is a strange animal" Cowles noted "a steadily increasing proportion of advertisers has come to realize that the reading public has more confidence and trust in those papers that don't suppress or distort news or their critics' honest opinions, and that consequently such papers provide better advertising results." (1963, 13) The public's perception of a newspaper was key to its success, and the key to that success was social responsibility, objectivity and fairness.

Beginning in the late 1930s, and throughout many of his speeches, he reflected on how journalism had advanced over the years. In "The American Newspapers," Cowles expressed dismay at newspapers that mixed opinion and news in places other than the editorial page. He discussed how this practice ultimately damaged the effectiveness of Colonel Robert R. McCormick and the *Chicago Tribune's* "otherwise magnificent free press educational crusade." (1938, 8) In this same chapter, he also noted that William Randolph Hearst damaged his credibility by openly criticizing President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal not only on the editorial page, but throughout the newspaper.

To Cowles, freedom of the press was essential to serving the public good. To have press freedom a newspaper had "an obligation to keep their news columns uncontaminated by their personal convictions or prejudices." (1938, 8) He offered a

more extensive description of a newspaper's obligation in a speech given in 1949 at the dedication of the expanded *Star* and *Tribune* plant. Once again it is clear Cowles firmly believed objectivity and balance were essential components of journalism.

> The primary obligation of a newspaper is to give its readers the news, all the news, without bias or slant or distortion or suppression in the news columns. We believe that only on our editorial pages should our own opinion be expressed . . . On our editorial pages we try to mold and guide public opinion so that the people will have sounder judgments on the vital political and economic and social problems confronting the country. ("A newspaperman foremost," 1983, 4A)

As Cowles traced the history of newspapers, he argued the improved quality of newspapers, which had led to greater public trust, was tied closely to the growing acceptance of objectivity and balance in the newsrooms. This acceptance he believed could be credited "to the reporters, copy readers and sub-editors who have taken increasing pride in their profession as its standards of integrity have risen. Part of the credit stems from the long time policy of the Associated Press and The United Press, which have made full and fair news coverage their major goal." (1951, 5)

In a May 4, 1951, speech, he once again expanded on this theme. In "The Responsibility of the Free World in Crisis" Cowles said he agreed with the 1947 Hutchins Commission report, *A Free and Responsible Press*. In particular, he supported the "implication . . . that unless the press generally manifests more self discipline and shows more obvious concern for the genuine public interest than some papers show, the dangers of restrictions upon our free press are very real." (1951, 11)

Even with his political activities, Cowles was able to achieve his goal of objectivity. He was often recognized for his ability to strike balance in news coverage, even in the political arena where "those who are taking an active part become unduly

sensitive and tend to exaggerate those news stories which they think injure their candidates and, at the same time, they take for granted or minimize those news stories which tend to assist their candidates." (Politics, November 4, 1954, File 10-4) In fact, following the 1954 election, Minnesota governor Elmer Anderson wrote to Cowles congratulating him on his successful election coverage.

> Now that the great activity of the campaign and the excitement of the post-election period have taken their place as just another experience in history, I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of public service rendered by your publications.
>
> The coverage given the Minnesota campaign was unprecedented in my memory. Personal travel by your political writers into all parts of the state, trailing candidates and securing the sentiment of cross-sections of the citizenry, and the brief summaries of utterances of the many candidates certainly brought the story of current developments directly to our populace.
>
> Personally I feel it must be far easier to be a candidate than a writer or editor in a political campaign, for I can realize the problem involved in attempting to avoid being accused of bias and partiality. With campaign tensions and pressure building to a peak, there is bound to be feeling on the part of strong partisans and ardent supporters of particular candidates that proper balance in space, prominence, and interpretation is not being maintained. Yes, I believe in a campaign I would rather be a candidate than a newspaperman. (Politics, November 5, 1954, File 10-4)

Technology was another area Cowles anticipated would prompt change in the media. With increasing channels in which to inform the public, Cowles was concerned that the public would not receive the information necessary to make informed decisions. On occasion he cited his concern about the newest growing medium. "Television may be the greatest potential agency for adult education we have, but there is a grave danger that it will develop in a pattern where it will not serve the public welfare where it might." (1951, 14)

However, Cowles saw increasing technology as an asset to newspapers, particularly those in communities without competition. Where the Hutchins Commission recommended that additional daily newspapers would increase integrity of newspapers, Cowles disagreed. He claimed that the editors and publishers of a newspaper in a single-ownership community had

> a deeper feeling of their responsibilities and obligations to their communities and readers because of the very absence of competition . . . The newspaper that is alone in its field can present the news in better perspective, and resist that pressure for immediacy which makes for incomplete, shoddy or premature reporting." (1954, 2)

In addition, he argued those critics who believed these same newspapers were the sole source of news, information and ideas were wrong. He noted several other viable options his readers would seek for additional points of view and information: television, radio, news magazines, labor papers, community papers, outside dailies, etc. (1954, 3)

The bottom line for Cowles was that fairness and objectivity were key to successfully providing useful information to his readers. Without these key elements he believed a newspaper would not be able fulfill its social responsibility of providing information. These were the elements that would allow journalism the flexibility to grow with societal change. The future, as Cowles saw it, is remarkably similar to the tenets of public journalism.

> People will want far more interpretive news from their papers so that they can understand what is happening. People will want more background information. People will want not only the bare facts of what did happen yesterday but will want from their newspapers information on what is probably going to happen tomorrow or next week or next month. The relative importance of editorial writers will greatly increase. It will not be tub-thumping, violent, partisan editorial assertions that the readers will want, but understandable analyses of the complicated problems that trouble them. (1951, 15)

Cowles did not object to newspapers interpreting the news; in fact, he promoted it. He believed that most of the interpretation of news should occur on the editorial pages, and if it did appear in the news columns, it should be clearly marked. Cowles addressed the issue of interpretation in the 1943 *Editor & Publisher* piece that examined the Cowles family philosophy.

> 'Too many papers are either content to merely carry the wire services accounts, or they give only one side of a story in a poisonous partisan way . . . Radio commentators have interpreted and clarified the news at the same time as they told it. Likewise, *Time* magazine's success is largely due to its ability to clarify and interpret as it reports the week's news. Newspapers must learn to paint in the background as well as sounding the dominant notes of day-by-day action. The danger of interpretation lies in the possibility of serving a selfish partisan interest. But if the American press is going to do a better job, the only answer seems to be to allow more leeway to staff writers. Publisher should seek out intelligent writers who have the same journalistic philosophy as the editor and then give them plenty of latitude . .' (Brandenburg, 1943, 28)

Public Journalism: In such a climate, experimentation and creativity are imperative; old habits, however, "sacred," may have to go — though change must always be guided by ethical core values and an understanding of how democracy works.

Conventional Journalism: Experimentation threatens to cross the line into unethical behavior, bias and carelessness about standards. Besides, experimentation is usually a synonym for fad.

Unlike scientific experiments where the same trial may be run time and again to determine whether an outcome is accurate, public journalism experiments are unique to individual readerships. Yet "experiment" is an appropriate term for the public journalism projects that are being carried out across the nation. Public journalists struggle to find ways of gauging public interest and focusing their coverage toward that interest. In these attempts, they typically use techniques such as polling, focus groups and town meetings to isolate the issues concerning the public.[8] These techniques are not new concepts. The Cowles family first began using George Gallup after World War I to measure readership levels regarding the use of photos, particularly after *The Des Moines Register* had run reproductions of combat photos from a Laurence Stallings book on World War I.[9] They found photo series had twice the readership as the best comic and best cartoon. (Furlong, 1968, 72)

At the *Minneapolis Tribune*, public opinion polls continued to be printed in the paper, but polling was also used to gauge reader's interest. (Cowles, May 1998) In addition, John Cowles Jr. noted that "the leadership was always interested in what people

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[8] In a May 1998 interview, John Cowles Jr. noted that public journalists imply they have created many of the tools used in so-called public journalism projects. He disagreed with this implication and said these were tools "good newspapers have been using for a long time. They're really old hat." (Interview, 1998)

[9] Gallup created the Gallup opinion poll. As a student at the University of Iowa, he developed opinion survey techniques that led to the establishment of the American Institute of Public Opinion (the Gallup Poll) in 1935.

thought. The notion that your editors and executives are asking questions in forums outside the newsroom is commonsensical." (Interview, May 1998)

In his speeches, John Cowles Sr. spoke extensively about understanding what the public wanted and suggested the use of some of these same techniques. In an April 24, 1944, speech, Cowles suggested that his fellow publishers and editors needed to pay more attention to reader surveys. He urged them to undertake a more comprehensive look at where their readers were focusing their attention. He encouraged them to study their readership longer than a day because

> most newspapers haven't scratched the surface of the possible benefits from intelligently conducted reader sources. Almost every newspaper needs to learn a lot more about what the public actually does read, and what it skips, in that paper. The more experience we have in our various publications with reader surveys, the more highly we rate them as an editing and publishing tool, and the greater we estimate their future potentialities will be as we learn how to use them better. ("What the newspaper publisher wants from his promotions department," 4)

Cowles' encouragement of readership surveys was most likely prompted by his own favorable surveys. In March 1954, a study was done "to determine what Minneapolis readers think of the Minneapolis Star and Tribune (a) as newspapers , (b) as a community institution." (Minnesota Poll, 1954, File 10-4) The study was a comparison of a similar report done in 1949. The overall reports supported what Cowles had been promoting, objectivity was important and the newspapers' involvement in the community was key. For example,

> the public has a higher regard for the quality and performance of the newspapers today than it indicated in 1949 in a dozen or more ways — fairness, coverage of various categories of news, impartiality in treatment of "special groups," etc . . .

> 70% believe the Star and Tribune "gave equal attention and fair treatment in their news columns: to Eisenhower and Stevenson in the1952 presidential election campaign . . .
>
> More than four out of five readers again agree that the Star and Tribune "do help to build: the City of Minneapolis . . . (Minnesota Poll, March 1954, File 10-4)

In this same speech were several other ideas in which Cowles described how the newspaper should improve its standing in the community. As the title indicates, "What the newspaper publisher wants from his promotions department," the promotions department was considered central to reaching out to the community. Cowles suggested that the promotions department survey all points of contact between the newspapers and its readers because "a newspaper deals in one way or another with such a high proportion of the people in its community that there are innumerable opportunities for irritation to arise." (1944, 2) In the context of this particular speech, Cowles meant no matter what department a citizen reached he should be treated with respect.

Outside the newspaper, the promotions department had an equally important role in community leadership. At the time of this speech, D-Day was approaching and the end of World War II was certainly in sight, so postwar planning was an important issue.[10] Cowles acknowledged that many newspapers believed this planning was primarily an editorial function, but he felt it was a function of both departments. Cowles suggested that a promotions department could "step in, dig out the facts, and make recommendations to your editors or publishers as to the things that your paper should do both to coordinate the plans of the various independent agencies and also to take

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[10] Another important issue was the upcoming presidential election. Within the war coverage, a Gallup poll traced the public opinion about a proposed constitutional amendment to implement presidential term limits. The poll showed the percentage of those Americans in favor and those opposed to the proposed amendment from 1937 until April 1944. It also showed how the statistics broke down along party lines. (April 26, 1944)

community leadership in postwar planning among all the private and business groups." (1944, 2)

In this case, Cowles' beliefs were found on the editorial page as well. On the same day he presented this particular speech, an editorial appeared in the *Minneapolis Tribune* that called for the community to begin postwar planning, particularly housing development. The editorial writers expressed concerns about urban sprawl and how it would affect property owners. The public should care because "world planning affords opportunities for interesting discussion, but city planning will have effects more immediately to the interest of the city property owner confronted with lowering values and increasing taxes that eventually must lead to liquidation." (1944, 6)

Cowles was prepared to find ways of communicating with the public. This meant posing questions in editorial that would promoted public debate, paying attention to polls that reflected public opinion, and bringing local, regional, state, nation and world news into perspective for his diverse readership.

Public Journalism: Citizens may well want to participate more intelligently in public life, but they find too many hurdles in their way.

Conventional Journalism: The media and political life provide ample opportunity to participate; if people stay out or merely complain, it's their own choice.

The simple economics of newspaper publishing have influenced the way news is covered. Many Cowles speeches address the pressure newspapers were under to be money-making ventures. Through the years different situations affected the newspapers, but the pressure to be profitable remained the constant.

Understanding that advertising was directly tied to the quality of his product, Cowles believed it was important to the financial success of a newspaper to be socially responsible, fair and objective. In the 1954 speech, "The future of American newspapers" Cowles said,

> the daily papers that have had or are having circulation trouble are those that have relied heavily upon entertainment features and sex and crime sensationalism, or are papers which all too frequently tend to distort and slant the news and make it buttress their editorial page opinions. Those daily papers that have been growing in circulation are, with minor exceptions, those that try to present the news completely and without bias. (1954, 5)

The growth of technology had the potential of creating obstacles that would inhibit the media's ability to provide information to the public. More channels of communication meant more information for the public to digest, and this could be overwhelming. However, Cowles also noted that the developing but improved technology should not be discouraging.

> The expanding economy of abundance, advertising of all kinds, newspaper, magazine, radio, and television, will play an even larger role (than) it does today in keeping the economy prosperous and the standard of living rising. The more serviceable newspapers become, the more surely will they flourish and prosper in the years ahead. In addition to complete and unbiased news reports, people will want more interpretive news and background information. The relative

> importance of editorial writers will, I think, increase. Readers will want more how-to-do-it news and more leisure living news . . . With a steadily rising educational level, readers will be more interested in news of science, medicine, and education, more interested in the whole gamut of sociological problems. (1954, 9)

Although Cowles believed the news columns were dedicated to fair and balanced reporting, an examination of the *Minneapolis Tribune* during select time periods in the 1950s and 1960s noted a re-occurring approach called "News Analysis: What the News Means." One example of what was covered in this series included an article printed during President John F. Kennedy's 1961 visit to Paris. The article examined the impact his wife, Jackie, had on the French because of her understanding of the culture and language, as well as her overall impact on foreign relations. This article was of particular importance for two reasons. One, it clearly demonstrated the influence a First Lady could have in foreign relations. But, two, it placed in perspective her role in the upcoming discussions between Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev, the leader of the Soviet Union. It was not that Mrs. Kennedy could shape foreign policy, but her overall goodwill helped smooth over some difficult situations.[11]

A second example of the News Analysis being used to supplement news coverage followed the September 1961 bombing of a Birmingham, Alabama, church that killed four young African-American girls. This was a national story with many implications, some of which could be covered in traditional news coverage. But, again the analysis provided supplemental coverage. One news analysis that ran on September 21, 1961,

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[11] In addition to the News Analysis, news coverage in the *Minneapolis Tribune* for Kennedy's visit to France and his talks with Khrushchev was comprehensive. In an attempt to give the public more information about the news coverage, the *Tribune* ran a short article about the two reporters who were covering the President's trip.

discussed the mood in Birmingham as the children were buried. This analysis was supplemented with an editorial meant to put the analysis in perspective — they were to provide "supporting opinions not necessarily in our own editorials, but from opinion pieces from the wire services." (September 21, 1961, 6) This statement was particularly significant because Cowles was widely known as an advocate for civil rights.

On another occasion, the *StarTribune* used the news columns to educate readers about the results of a recent election in which several incumbents lost. In a series that did not run on consecutive days, the following explanation preceded an article about Senator Herbert Humphrey, who had won his re-election bid.

> The relations of Sen. Humphrey (D. Minn.) with the people who have contributed to his rise to political influence are discussed in the following article. It is the second of a series in which Tribune writers are commenting on the meaning of last week's political turnover in Minnesota. (November 7, 1954, 1A)

In effect, these articles were mini-civics lessons, which supported Cowles' belief that newspapers helped the public understand what was happening in the world around them.

Public Journalism: Citizens deserve a bigger place in the newspaper itself. Papers should never "dumb down," but must reorient themselves around citizens' concerns.

Conventional Journalism: News is a profession; journalists write newspapers, readers don't. Inviting citizens to judge what's news, making them the subject of coverage and the like are inherently dumbing down — a form of pandering.

Much as public journalists express the need for journalists to reconnect with the public, Cowles himself continually spoke about newspapers serving the public's interest. He believed the public was wise enough to sense when the media would stray from this interest. Specifically, in "The future of American newspapers," Cowles said that "as people have become better educated and better informed they have increasingly come to sense that certain newspapers tend to color or slant the news, and many of them resent it. That is why, it seems to me, those papers that do the most complete and unbiased job of news reporting tend increasingly to hold old and win new readers." (1954, 6)

Cowles believed the media had a role in the continuing education of the public. In the same speech, he noted that the public was increasingly becoming more interested in global news.

> I do believe, however, that because of the extraordinary rise in average years of schooling, and the increased travel, including wartime assignments, that have taken place, as well as the leadership of newspapers that have provided more complete reports of world news, many more people are now interested in reading about the whole global range of human activity than were a generation ago. (1954, 6)

Cowles continually worked to understand the public that read his paper. After explaining how the *New York Times*, while an excellent paper, only appealed to one-eighth of the population in New York City and its suburbs, he said the *Minneapolis StarTribune* could not survive if the same were true for his paper. In fact in "The newspaper is a strange animal" he stated that nearly half of the families in Minnesota

either read the morning *Tribune* or afternoon *Star*, and nearly 60 percent of the families read the Sunday paper. This meant his paper had to appeal to a diverse group of people.

> Certainly in cities of less than a million population, newspapers, if they are to be economically self-sustaining, simply must be edited to interest and serve all the people, not just one class. Just as a department store carries a wide range of merchandise that will appeal to all different economic groups, or as a big cafeteria provides a variety of foods to appeal to different tastes, so must most newspapers, in order to survive, carry news and feature content that will interest people of both sexes, of all ages, of all vocations and all educational levels. (1951, 10)

Under Cowles' leadership, the *StarTribune* consistently attempted to "widen and whet the public's interest in serious subjects. The World Affairs Program, which runs in the *Star* each week, and the Science Reading Program which runs in the *Tribune* each week, are two examples of this." (The Newspaper is a Strange Animal, 1963, 6) Also aimed at broadening the readers' interest, the two papers had reporters who specialized in science, education and religious news. For the *StarTribune* readers, this meant credibility. Alcott noted that Cowles believed the readers wanted stories from experts they knew rather than some unknown person hundreds of miles away. (interview, 1998)

Expanding the readers' interest went beyond the newspaper as well. Education was important to Cowles because he thought it built a better society, so the *Star Tribune* embarked on a number of community initiatives. These public services included:

> world affairs school programs; science reading programs; newspaper workshops, scholarships to newspapers workshops; high school journalism clinics; open houses; films on newspapers and the Upper Midwest; a speaker's service; soil conservation programs; world affairs competitions; voters' guides; fashion shows; veterans' dinners; high school athletics awards; junior golf tournaments; boys' baseball clinics; state fair services; and scholarship programs for carrier sales men, which have been in existence for a quarter of a century. The Cowles papers have undertaken programs that have proved themselves effective for industry, and found them to be valuable. (Golden, 1966)

Helping the citizens to become involved in the community was continually at the forefront of the Cowles agenda. Over the years, little has changed in the way the news is covered. Instead, the focus is on how it is presented. "We do more news summaries. The make up of the paper is different and easier for the reader to find their way through the paper. It is more attractive looking, but the overall philosophy hasn't changed." (Kruidenier, 1998, interview) Kruidenier added that the Cowles family wanted the public to feel they were the primary focus of the newspapers. If that meant more phonelines in the newsroom for people to call in on, then additional phone lines were put in. Focus groups could be used to determine public issues, however, they were not sole method of deciding the news.

Ultimately, the Cowles family believed they needed to serve readers, do their best to inform them, and work with the community to determine what was best for its growth and working towards that end. (Morley Cowles Ballantine interview, 1998) According to James Alcott, John and Elizabeth Cowles' own involvement reflected on the credibility of the newspaper. "It was very important to (Cowles) to establish himself as a peer in the community so he and the newspaper would have credibility." (Interview, September 1998) Alcott also noted that Cowles and his wife, Elizabeth, went to great lengths to also establish a sound moral standing in the community, so that the community would respect their stand on a variety of social issues, as well as understand the Cowles family truly believed in these issues.

Aside from John Cowles Sr.'s own accomplishments, Elizabeth was quite active in a number of social issues. After recognizing a need for a birth control clinic in Des Moines, she helped found Planned Parenthood. Even after the family moved to

Minneapolis, she continued her involvement with the organization, serving in a number of capacities. In addition, Elizabeth Cowles was involved in the United Negro College Fund, Minneapolis Urban League, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Woman's Club of Minneapolis, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Minneapolis League of Women Voters, the Minneapolis Inter-Faith Fair Housing Program, American Association of University Women, the National Society of Colonial Dames of America, and numerous other committees and boards. (The Minneapolis Star, 1976, 1A)

Public Journalism: 'Public life should work and journalism has a role in making it work. Conventional Journalism: It would be nice if public life worked, but it's beyond our role to make it work and it's dangerous to think we can.

Cowles strongly believed the media had a role in preserving democracy. In his speeches, Cowles often noted that the United States faced many threats; however, he was certain we would "surmount them if the people of the United States are sufficiently informed to understand the nature and dimensions of the problems, and are sufficiently open minded to modify their past convictions in the light of new facts." (1959, 2) Through his own example, as well as through words on the editorial page, issues of local, national and international significance were covered and discussed.

Among the many issues Cowles personally promoted were race relations and internationalism. These were also often reflected in the Minneapolis *StarTribune*. Particularly as the debate surrounding civil rights reached a crescendo in the 50s and 60s, Cowles and the editorial staff kept the civil rights crusade alive in Minnesota. Cowles believed a solution needed to be found for the racial unrest before international matters could be dealt with effectively. In a commencement speech at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota, Cowles addressed the relationship between civil rights and being a dominant world power. In particular, he noted that the

> race riots and racial discriminations and hatreds . . . are the most effective possible ammunition to help the communists in their efforts to take over Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Our failure to solve race problems here has done and is doing the United States more harm than all the military secrets that communist spies have ever stolen from us." (1961, 4)

Cowles emphasized not only would democracy fail in these countries, but the freedom of the United States was at risk.

> If we are going to be able to achieve the kind of conditions in the world under which a nation with our purposes and goals can live and prosper in freedom, we must eradicate race prejudice in the United States, so that we can convince the peoples with colored skins on other continents that we regard them as friends and not as inferiors or enemies. (1961, 4)

Cowles concerns about civil rights and democracy were also reflected in the *Minneapolis Tribune*. During the three days before and three days after Cowles' commencement speech, examples of the paper's support of civil rights was clearly evident. On June 1, 1961, the editorial writers lent their support to U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy's plan to force the Interstate Commerce Commission to end discrimination on the interstate passenger bus system. On June 2, the editorial writers offered a public apology to an African student at the University of Minnesota who was denied service at a local cafeteria saying the actions were "a basic violation of human rights." (1961, 6)

Cowles often referred to international issues and their impact on the American society. He believed these international issues had as much to do with the changing society as domestic issues did. In his speech to graduates of Gustavus Adolphus, he attempted to demonstrate the importance of international issues.

> We are living in the most revolutionary period in all history, because we are not only in the midst of a scientific revolution, but also in the midst of worldwide political, social, and economic revolutions as well. We, as a nation, have not yet adequately adjusted our thinking to the realities that exist in the world today. We feel frustrated and confused, largely because we are still instinctively clinging to many outworn ideas which may have been valid at some time in the past, but which are not valid under today's new conditions. (1961, 2)

In reading correspondence from Cowles to members of his family, it is clear that personally keeping apprised of international issues was of great import. He had an extensive network of friends and acquaintances who added to his knowledge.[12]

Much as his own observations about national and international issues formed the framework for his speeches, on a number of occasions they did the same for articles. In "Glimpses of the Soviet Union," a young John Cowles attempted to give *The Des Moines Register* readers a broad overview of country in transition. In the 1923 article, Cowles described the difficulties of obtaining entry into the county, how the new government works, the education system and several other broad subjects, which are separated into categories aimed at giving readers a point of reference to interpret how the Soviet culture is vastly different. His final article, "Conclusions," was written in the first person, but it is apparent that is why he felt compelled to write this series.

> I am convinced — which I was not, before — that the bolshevist leaders are still determined to try to bring around world revolution. They are aiding, to as great as degree as their resources permit, revolutionary movements in other countries." (Cowles, 1923, 16)

Cowles provided this first-hand analysis on at least one other occasion. In early 1941, Cowles traveled with Wendell Willkie to Britain to assess the progress of the war. During this trip, regular feature stories appeared in the *StarTribune*.

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[12] For example, in a letter to his parents on December 20, 1944, that begins with a thank you for Christmas gifts, Cowles spends the greater portion of the two-page letter recounting a discussion he had with a former employee about the current situation in China. The former employee who had been in charge of the radio promotions department had joined the army and spent 13 months in China helping the Chungking government with its national and international broadcasting. He believed the Communists were quickly gaining power, and the United States was getting little information about what was actually happening. Although Cowles provides primarily a summary of this discussion, this correspondence is indicative of his desire to make sure others were informed about what was happening around them.

As evidenced by his personal correspondence, his speeches and own articles in the newspaper, he obviously sought to bring the news home to the Twin Cities. He did this for several reasons, but the reason Cowles believed international issues needed to be discussed at all levels was underscored in the 1959 speech, "A Glimpse at the Future."

> What I am today affirmatively advocating is, first, that the American people and the congress re-examine, in the light of the gravity of the international situations, some of our present political and economic positions with a view toward modifying them so that we can attain solidarity between ourselves and the rest of the free world. (1959, 2)

If change were to happen, then the public needed to have sufficient information to make the decisions to encourage that change, regardless of whether it happened at a national or international level. Cowles did not just suggest that the public examines current issues and policies, but he noted in "The newspaper is a strange animal" that the media had an important role in public policy by actually leading discussions about issues of importance.

> In addition to printing the news, we have a second important function. This is to attempt to lead and influence public opinion by persuading our readers to make what we regard as sound judgments on the issues confronting the community, state and nation. (1963, 7)

Perhaps Cowles felt comfortable calling for the media to lead discussions about public policy because he participated actively in public life, particularly politics. The Cowles family, particularly John, were quite involved in politics. The Cowleses were classified as Republicans, but as one article noted this was not necessarily reflected on the editorial pages. "The *Register & Tribune* is Republican, but not blindly so. It did not support Warren Harding and it favors many a Democrat for State office." ("Iowa

Formula," 1935, 28) Even in the later articles covering John Cowles, many mention his commitment to civic affairs, however, his party affiliation was seldom mentioned.

One of Cowles' most public forays into the political arena involved Wendell Willkie's campaign for president in 1940. Willkie was a liberal Republican and shared Cowles' view of internationalism. Cowles worked to get Willkie nominated as the Republican candidate at the 1940 national convention over the more conservative and isolationist-minded Thomas Dewey and Robert Taft. (Banaszynski and Rebuffoni, 1983, 4A).

After his involvement in Willkie's campaign, Cowles remained involved in politics and continued to influence the political climate. Cowles demonstrated an almost instinctive understanding of politics and the nation's political climate. Of particular interest are Cowles' letters to Dwight Eisenhower, not only encouraging him to run for office, but offering his support and counsel. In a letter dated February 14, 1952, Cowles sent Eisenhower a letter sizing up not only upcoming Minneapolis primary, but the national situation overall. He offered Eisenhower the latest data from the *StarTribune's* poll, which showed Eisenhower leading the candidates with 39 percent of those polled preferring him to three other candidates. He also observed:

> I feel certain that the Republican convention will nominate you if the situation in Europe should develop in such a way that you would feel you could get relieved of your NATO job and come home, say, in May and make a number of speeches setting forth your views on domestic problems. The professional politicians also naturally like to know a man personally before they vote for his nomination. If the situation in Europe is such that you don't feel that you can come home prior to the convention, I think it is doubtful whether you will be nominated." (Dwight Eisenhower Campaign, File 10-2)

In a May 7, 1952 letter, Cowles continued to offer his counsel. Of particular note, he gave Eisenhower tips on how to handle himself during an upcoming press conference.

> Obviously at every press conference you will be asked questions designed to embarrass you. If you have made it clear at Abilene that you have not yet had time to study all the issues and that you are not going to take positions on some things until after study, conferences, and mature deliberation, you can decline to answer many questions without that fact hurting your prospects. I think candor and frankness along this line would appeal to the people and disarm some critics. (Dwight Eisenhower Campaign, File 10-1)

Perhaps because of his advice, Cowles held a number of temporary government jobs that included being the assistant to the director of the Lend-Lease Program in 1943. Cowles also reportedly turned down a number of other opportunities including cabinet posts by President Eisenhower and Willkie, if he had won. Cowles refused these posts "fearing that his newspapers would be expected in exchange to pledge allegiance to administration policies." (Ackerberg, 1974, 2B) However, Cowles did serve as a consultant to the National Security Council and later as a delegate to the White House Conference on Education during the Eisenhower administration. During the Truman Administration he was a member of the commission that drafted the plan for a unified armed forces. He also served as a member of the advisory committee to the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. ("A newspaperman foremost," 1983, 4A)

At another level, Cowles believed his executives should be equally committed to the community. Not only were editorials and features written about the arts, Star executives were instrumental in founding and raising funds for the Minnesota Theater Company, which led to the establishment of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis.

One survey showed that from 1940 until 1964 the Cowles papers had the highest representation in civic leadership positions in the Twin Cities — more than double the next company. (Golden, 1966) John Cowles Jr. noted that his father was all in favor of his executives being involved in the community, and the leadership found civic involvement was an effective way to stay in touch with the community and readers. John Cowles Sr. was quoted as saying

> We try to take the leadership both as a newspaper and as individuals in all civic matters related to our community. We work just as hard outside our columns to be good citizens and we encourage all our key executive to be involved in community affairs. (Brandenburg, 1943, 27)

John Cowles Jr. noted that the reporters weren't automatically excluded from civic involvement. He said, "It is going too far to say they are not going to be involved in anything. Then the journalist isn't being a good citizen. They should isolate themselves as little as possible and only from those situations where there is a real or perceived conflict of interest." (Interview, May 1998)

All this community involvement might be perceived as an obstacle to the public, but Cowles was conscious of the potential conflicts of interest. He did not want to jeopardize the news staff, so stories and editorials concerning groups, projects and other interests were not shown to Cowles before they went to print. (Kruidenier interview, 1998) For his executives and the news staff were not encouraged to participate in activities where they might influence how the story was covered. (Cowles interview, 1998) However, John Cowles Jr. noted that most of the time, there was no problem.

Cowles may have believed the public needed information to make reasonable decisions about their lives at the local, national and international level. As a respected

member of his community, he was able to provide that information. Because he was involved with his community, he was able to help filter what information was necessary and help the public over most obstacles that blocked their community's progress.

Chapter Six — Conclusion

In an era when the call is being made for the media to reconnect with the public, it is chastening to recall that at least at one point in history a journalist understood how to connect with his readers. Although John Cowles Sr. did not have to compete with the immediacy and sheer number of media outlets present in today's society, his understanding of public policy and community issues and how these contributed to his ability to reach out and provide information and solutions to his readers is an interesting case study. Perhaps John Cowles Sr. was lucky in addition to being skilled. As Alcott observed, Cowles was able to have strong positions and maintain objectivity in his newspapers. In the following Cowles noted the importance of objectivity as he responded in a letter to a reader who believed the paper had not been fair and unbiased in recent election coverage.

> I am convinced, as are most editors and publishers of this generation that newspapers exert influence with their readers in almost direct proportion to their fairness and impartiality in presenting the news. I am convinced that our editorials are more influential than would be the case if our readers did not believe that we were trying to be fair and nonpartisan and objective in our news columns. (File 10-4, Politics)

There are public journalists who realize journalists like Cowles did contribute to the overall good of journalism. For instance, a promotion piece for the Pew Center on Civic Journalism quoted Ed Fouhy, executive director, as believing that "civic journalism is a fresh label on an old idea — that journalism has an obligation to provide people with the news and information they need to make the decisions they are called upon to make. In a self-governing society, it helps people behave as citizens."

David Kruidenier said that all journalism is public if done correctly but he also cautioned that journalists cannot expect the public to determine what is important and should be covered, particularly if they do not have access to all the information. (May 1998) This new movement to reach out to the public may have intrigued Cowles. For someone who placed value on polling and community involvement, he might not have understood how the media could have lost sight of their audience in the first place. But he wasn't naïve, he knew there would be public challenges about the effectiveness and value of news coverage. In one of his later speeches he noted that the media would have to continue to rely on their principles if they were to remain trustworthy.

> I am convinced that over the long pull a newspaper's editorial exert influence with its readers in pretty direct proportion to the degree of confidence that the readers have in the paper's fairness in presenting the news. (1954, 6)

Cowles had at least at least two significant advantages over public journalists. One, there is little question Cowles had a global view, but he was able to maintain a local perspective. While he did not have to compete with as many channels of communication, he knew the importance of balancing both a local and global perspective. Today's journalists struggle with the sheer magnitude of data, much of which is coming so rapidly, it is difficult to interpret and put into perspective for readers.

Cowles had another advantage over today's journalists and that was longevity. Throughout current journalism literature, including that of public journalism, members of the media express concern about the movement of reporters from newspaper to newspaper, staying only long enough to gain experience to find a better job offer somewhere else. It is difficult to promote community journalism when the reporters do not know the community. In 1965, Cowles addressed the *StarTribune's* 20-year club,

which recognized employees with 20 or more years of service, and congratulated 16 new members to the club. "This brings the club's membership to a total of 400 or about one-fourth of all the full-time employees of the Star and Tribune." (Cowles, File 1,2) Although this number included other employees outside the editorial and reporting staff, it still remains impressive.

Even after his death in 1983, the family of John Cowles Sr. continued to make an impact on journalism and kept the Cowles family journalistic philosophy alive. In three separate interviews with different members of the Cowles family, it became apparent that there was rarely, if ever, a conflict between good journalism and good civic involvement at a Cowles-owned newspaper. As John Cowles Jr. noted, "Many businesses do not take into account the community. Good newspapers help communities grow. For its own sake, contributing to the health of a community is not just good business, but an obligation because it is the right thing to do." (Interview, May 1998)

Chapter entitled
"THE AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS"
by
JOHN COWLES

(Appearing in "America Now", edited by Harold E. Stearns, and published in 1938 by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York and London.)

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THE AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS

That public confidence in the integrity and disinterestedness of American newspapers as a whole has declined in recent years few journalists will deny. Attacks on newspapers have increased both in number and importance. The question as to whether that lessened confidence is deserved may for the moment be set aside. Whether or not a thing is true may in the short run be of less importance than whether people think it is true.

Excerpts from a speech by Arthur Hays Sulzberger, publisher of The New York Times, generally regarded as America's most important newspaper, illustrate the existing situation.

Said Mr. Sulzberger: "There is, in my opinion, a growing disposition on the part of the public to view with skepticism that which they read in their newspapers and to distrust newspaper motives . . . I detect certain doubts as to the accuracy of reporting . . . There is discernible a feeling among a considerable group of readers that the personal interests of publishers are often put ahead of public service . . . The failure to keep editorial opinion out of the news columns, and closely akin to it, the failure to present adequately both sides of a moot question, are matters of growing concern . . ."

In the same vein speaks George Fort Milton of The Chattanooga News: "Some enemies of the freedom of the press are in the press itself. Those are the men who ignore the public trusteeship of their institutions, who give only one side of the picture, who deal in half-truths or whole lies, whether about government, political parties, labor and capital, or about the poor, helpless individual caught in the hideous glare of some news event."

To understand the present situation more clearly, it may be helpful to trace what has happened to American newspapers during the last generation, particularly from the economic aspect. Believers in the theory of economic interpretation of all events will find much to support their views, but, at the same time, more than a little to refute them.

First of all, the metropolitan American newspapers have become great capitalistic business enterprises, requiring huge investments in plant and equipment, with enormously expensive weekly payrolls and outlays for gathering, processing, printing, and distributing the news.

Two or three generations ago an ambitious printer with a few hundred dollars and a passion to express his opinions could start a little newspaper. If he caught the popular fancy his journal might grow out of its earnings to become influential and successful. Many of our leading dailies were started in just that way. Newspaper publishing was a vocation easy to enter. There was the traditional free play of competition. Cities large and small had many papers. They started and flourished or languished and died. There was a voice for every opinion.

As newspapers, they were poor according to current standards. Few attempted either to print all the news or to print it impartially and objectively, as our more responsible papers try to do today. Almost anybody, however, could start a paper if the spirit moved him, and a reader could choose from the many some one to read that coincided with his own opinions or prejudices.

Then just as the great industrial and banking and transportation corporations were beginning to take form and rise to power in their fields, a similar trend toward concentration, toward fewer and stronger — and better -- newspapers, commenced. The thing was inexorable.

Thirty years ago there were scores of different automobile manufacturers -- by today's standards all relatively small and weak. Gradually some companies, because of more capital, or better engineering facilities, or more aggressive management, began to draw away from the rest. They could offer the public more for their money than could their weaker competitors, and their volume of business pyramided while the smaller units fell by the way.

Possibly it is socially undesirable for the automobile industry to be concentrated into the relatively few great aggregations that exist today. Possibly it is also socially undesirable that today Detroit, for example, with a million and a half people, should have but one morning newspaper. The same force -- that apparently irresistible economic trend toward fewer and larger and stronger units -- whether automobile manufacturing or newspaper publishing -- is responsible.

During the first three decades of the twentieth century advertising volume grew enormously in America, along with the merchandising of goods on a national scale and the accelerated trend toward larger business units. The increased income that the newspapers received from this development in advertising enabled them greatly to extend their news-gathering facilities and improve their product, provided them with the revenue with which to add "features" -- comic strips and serial stories and all the other things that the average person prefers to serious, heavy news.

The newspapers get the greater part of their income from advertising. They could not exist solely on what the reader pays. As results from advertising are in rough proportion to a publication's circulation, the newspapers with the most circulation, broadly speaking, produce the most profitable returns for the advertiser.

Consequently the pressure to get more and more circulation steadily increased. The revenue from the increased advertising patronage enabled those newspapers that received it to enlarge their staffs and services and to print more news and features. This in turn widened still further their circulation leadership over their weaker competitors. The financially weaker papers were thus at a steadily increasing disadvantage in their efforts to win new or hold old readers.

The trend toward fewer newspapers, through mergers and suspensions, became nation-wide until today many fairly sizable cities (Denver, Louisville, Omaha, Toledo, St. Paul, Hartford, Des Moines, Memphis, Grand Rapids, Nashville, and others) have but one morning and one afternoon paper. In several of those cities both papers are owned by the same individual or company.

Many of our largest cities (Detroit, Cleveland, Baltimore, St. Louis, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Kansas City, Seattle) have only one morning paper and only two afternoon dailies. In three of these cities the single morning paper has common ownership with one of the two afternoon papers.

It would be a serious error, however, for one to assume that this trend toward fewer newspapers indicates that a few big nation-wide newspaper corporations are likely in the near future to own and operate any alarming proportion of the surviving papers.

Experience has proved that "chain papers," controlled and edited at one place, whether New York or San Simeon, are not the menace to alert locally owned and edited papers that some alarmists have believed. There are only two really large newspaper chains -- Scripps-Howard and Hearst. The most successful Scripps-Howard papers are apparently those with the largest measure of local management. The "Hearst menace" has steadily receded as a competitive threat to individually owned papers and Hearst's current influence on journalism has shrivelled to but a shadow of what it was. Within a few years the Hearst empire, already shrunk by sales and suspensions, will probably disintegrate into a handful of separate duchies and principalities. Even Scripps-Howard has recently sold or suspended some of the weaker links in its chain.

As the successful operation of a newspaper in a competitive field depends so largely upon the quality of its management and its ability to keep in tune with the town, being neither too far ahead of nor behind the local mores, a newspaper cannot be successfully operated like a branch of a mass-production factory. Intangible factors and the human elements are too important. There is small likelihood that a great newspaper trust could ever successfully operate a hundred papers in a hundred cities against locally owned competitors. The threat of any nation-wide newspaper monopoly is a phanton.

Similarly, distances in America are so great, and the appetite for local and State and regional news is so strong, that no "national daily" in the English sense is conceivable.

The trend toward mergers and suspensions, however, is accelerating. The prospect is for steadily fewer papers, many of them actual, or semi, local monopolies.

Immediately the question arises as to whether these actual or semi-monopolistic papers are doing a better or worse job of serving the public interest than are the papers in those cities where there are many competitors rather than few or none.

Eliminating New York City, which is in a class by itself because of its size and importance, the answer seems to be that the newspapers in those cities where there are comparatively few publications are certainly no worse and probably relatively better from both the professional and the public-service standpoint than are the papers in the towns with more dailies.

No list of "best" newspapers, no matter how small, would be complete without including such dailies as The Baltimore Sunpapers and The St. Louis Post-Dispatch. Both are in cities with limited competition. Conversely, the cities that are the most "over-newspapered", such as Boston, have, on the average, the poorest papers from all standpoints.

The explanation is simple. Those newspapers that are competitively the strongest not only have the financial means to give their readers a superior product, but -- other things being equal -- naturally have the greater editorial independence and are the less susceptible to pressure or venality.

Corruption of newspapers in any open or direct way is less common than critics of the press would have us believe. Pressure from advertisers does affect in greater or less degree many newspapers' policies in handling news, but so does pressure from other sources: pressure from religious bodies, from political machines with favors to dispense, from union labor, from organized groups of various kinds, as, in the '20's, in some sections, the Klan.

That the editorial and news policies of many newspapers are controlled by their business offices no one can deny. On the other hand, the evidence indicates that those newspapers that are financially the strongest and most firmly entrenched are less likely to be venal than are the weaker papers struggling to keep their noses above the water line. Therefore the trend toward fewer and stronger papers seems on the whole to mean a trend toward less corruptible papers.

From the social aspect probably the great danger in the existing newspaper situation is that because the surviving newspapers have on the whole been highly prosperous, or at least have represented large amounts of invested capital even if their current earnings have not been large, their owners as a class have tended to be too conservative, too well satisfied with things as they are.

In the first place, although few of them seem to realize it, newspaper owners as a class were beneficiaries of lavish unearned increment

the form of a huge increase in advertising revenue in the first three cades of this century. The values and earnings of their papers increased ormously. At the same time mechanical improvements and the expansion of ws and feature services, which the reading public quickly came to take r granted, increased the costs of starting and operating new papers to a int where as a practical matter no new competing publication could be tablished.

Persons unfamiliar with newspapering grossly underestimate what would cost to start a new paper or what the operating losses would be til a new paper, regardless of its management's ability, could conceivly change readers' and advertisers' habits sufficiently to become protable.

Because the newspaper publishers feel well entrenched, because ny of them are rich, because they have powerful organs through which to esent their views, as a class they tend to take themselves too seriously. ny unconsciously regard themselves about the way the feudal liege lords the Middle Ages must have regarded themselves, and, as local potentates, nduct themselves accordingly.

Because their newspapers are great capitalistic enterprises, it quite understandable why many of the owners have become too conservave, and why most of their papers do not seem accurately to reflect the spirations of the common run of people or the ideals of those who see sions of a brave new world.

Now all this does not mean that newspaper publishers as a class e intentionally dishonest in handling news, that they purposely color suppress reports of happenings to suit their social or economic or litical prejudices. Some, including several of the most conspicuous and werful, do.

If one will simply stop to think of the practical difficulties f accurately reporting, say, the causes and developments in a sit-down trike in half a dozen scattered automobile plants, with all of the conlicting charges and counter-charges by employer, by the A. F. of L. and y the C. I. O., one will appreciate what a newspaper, with its inflexible ress-times, is up against.

While it is entirely possible that Arthur Sulzberger or Roy oward may personally be so prosperous that he may fail to become as exerised over the plight of the underprivileged as the flaming idealists wish e did, that is no proof that he does not get more satisfaction, greater rofessional pride, and deeper ego gratification from seeing that his aper, whether The New York Times or The World-Telegram, prints the news onestly and fairly than he gets from anything else.

Similarly, such charges as that the Associated Press, for exmple, is consciously "coloring" the news of the Spanish civil war in behalf of the Loyalists or would intentionally misrepresent the Catholic hurch's attitude toward the Japanese invasion of China are ridiculous to ny one familiar with the A. P.'s set-up. As a mutual association of some

1300 American papers representing almost every shade of opinion (although the bulk of the member papers are economically conservative) and with many Catholic members, including some on the board of directors, it is childish to believe that the Associated Press would try to do other than transmit what it believed to be facts. That the A. P. makes an occasional mistake is less remarkable than that Kent Cooper has developed the organization to the point where it transmits so much news so rapidly with so few errors.

It is true that the Associated Press gets much of its American news originally from member papers. These members are predominantly conservative. In some cases their local news of, say, a capital-labor controversy may be biased pro-employer. Consequently the Associated Press, in spite of its efforts to transmit an objective news report, may at times carry stories that are not fair and accurate, but such instances are much fewer than the left wing critics assume.

Aside from the criticisms of the newspapers on the grounds that their reporting of the capital-labor controversy is biased, and that the newspapers' own views are those of vested capitalistic interests, the major current criticisms have a political origin.

To understand the background of the Roosevelt administration's frequent attacks on the integrity of the press and the accuracy of its reporting it is necessary to go back into the ancient history of 1933.

When the NRA was established, whether intentionally or not it provided what many or most publishers honestly regarded as the opening wedge toward possible control by the government of the press. That idea may have never originally occurred to President Roosevelt. Nevertheless, a large proportion of the publishers with complete sincerity feared it.

The administration threatened to impose a code — which in effect meant licensing — on the newspapers. The newspapers roared -- and properly so — about their constitutional rights and about freedom of the press. Naturally they attacked the administration. The administration professed complete purity of motive but demanded a code and retaliated to the newspapers' attacks, blow for blow. The controversy grew intensely bitter.

Now it so happens that many newspapers, particularly in the smaller cities and towns, employ school boys as carriers to deliver papers to the homes in their neighborhoods, an occupation quite dissimilar from street selling of papers in big cities.

Many of these smaller papers, using boys as home carriers, feared that under the child labor provisions of the NRA, a Washington bureaucracy might wreck their distribution systems. They feared that the government officials, unfamiliar with local conditions and unaware of the fact that many school authorities, particularly in the smaller communities, encourage the carrying of newspapers and regard it as beneficial for school boys from both the health and business training standpoints, might rule that persons under eighteen could not be carriers.

During this controversy many newspapers denounced Roosevelt as a would-be dictator planning to prevent criticism of his administration through possible use of the licensing power. Government spokesmen in turn denounced the newspapers as "exploiters of child labor".

The public — many of whom harbored grudges against their local papers because of any of a dozen reasons, valid or otherwise, revelled at hearing the newspapers "get theirs". Those papers that had not printed the news fairly and impartially over a long period of years, or that had shortsightedly not given expression to all points of view through allowing different groups to blow off steam in their "Letters to the Editor" columns, or newspapers that had been reticent about correcting errors or making deserved retractions, discovered to their surprise that many in their own communities strongly disliked them and enjoyed seeing them squirm.

It was a rude shock to the newspapers — and a good thing for them. The smart ones began to realize that just because they personally understood why it was imperative to have a free press in order to make democracy function, it didn't necessarily follow that the mass of the public shared their view.

It began to dawn on the newspaper owners that they had a big educational job ahead of them in order to make it clear that a free press is not simply a publisher's selfish privilege but a public heritage, and that newspapers should conduct themselves so that the average citizen would realize that freedom of the press was a matter of vital importance to him — not simply license for a publication owner to do with as he wished.

Whether one regards this whole "freedom of the press" controversy as a fake issue, which is the Roosevelt administration's professed attitude, or whether one regards it as most of the publishers in complete sincerity did, as an educational crusade against the imminent possibility of governmental control through licensing, in any event certain phases of the thing reacted adversely on the press as a whole.

Most newspapers endeavor to keep their news and views in separate compartments, plainly labelled so an unsuspecting reader will not imbibe opinion thinking it is fact.

If, in the early days of the NRA, the publisher of some prominent paper that is generally accepted as being objective in its news columns, such as The New York Times or World-Telegram, had only seized the torch of leadership for all the newspapers and had led the educational crusade explaining what freedom of the press means, and what the implications of press licensing are, the whole idea of democracy would today be more solidly grounded.

It so happened, however, that Colonel R. R. McCormick of The Chicago Tribune was chairman of the then relatively dormant "freedom of the press" committee of The American Newspaper Publishers Association.

From not infrequent contacts with Colonel McCormick over a period of years I have come to have not only real admiration for his out-

spoken courage but also a belief in his basic intellectual honesty according to his own convictions.

While most papers content themselves with printing news in their news columns and confining their views to the editorial page, The Chicago Tribune, however, possesses such complete confidence in the rectitude of its own opinions and such assurance in its clairvoyance that it feels it unnecessary to make this -- to it superfluous -- distinction between news and views. It feels that it is performing a greater public service by jumping ahead a cog and giving its opinions along with the news.

Because this situation is widely realized and because The Chicago Tribune's news columns had been anything but free from bias in reporting its detestation of everything connected with Mr. Roosevelt and the New Deal, the effect of Colonel McCormick's otherwise magnificent free press educational crusade was largely vitiated.

If other less partisan publishers had been out in the limelight as spokesmen for the press, the public reaction to and the effectiveness of the whole campaign might have been far different.

But Colonel McCormick and The Chicago Tribune did lead the fight, where others either failed to appreciate the significance of the issue or from expediency shrank back. No one can take that credit away from Colonel McCormick.

Next to The Chicago Tribune, probably Mr. Hearst's papers are most given to editorializing in their news columns. Mr. Hearst liked Mr. Roosevelt and the New Deal no better than did Colonel McCormick, and did not hesitate to say so in discussing either freedom of the press or anything else, in his news columns as well as on his editorial pages.

As a consequence, probably the two most important out of the extremely small group of metropolitan publishers who do not regard press freedom as an obligation to keep their news columns uncontaminated by their personal convictions or prejudices were put into the spotlight as representatives of the views of all publishers. And all newspapers were put into the same class and spattered with the same mud when the hand grenades were tossed back by the White House troops.

Partly due to this NRA row, partly to the fact that most newspaper owners are economic conservatives, the 1936 presidential campaign found an extraordinarily high proportion of the dailies supporting Landon -- or at least not supporting Roosevelt.

The Roosevelt forces, realizing that the newspaper publishers were a popular whipping boy, used the opportunity to attack the newspapers generally and charge them with all sorts of heinous offences, some of them undeniably deserved by some papers. Roosevelt rode triumphantly back into the White House and public confidence in the integrity and influence of the newspapers was reduced to a new low.

Apparently the administration still regards the newspapers as a popular target, for in November, 1937, a year after his re-election,

Mr. Roosevelt pointedly omitted any reference to newspapers, although commending the radio and movies for keeping the public informed.

Jim Farley followed the President's lead in praising the radio as a new agency for communication because speeches are "uncontaminated by coincident editorial comment" and the public mind consequently not "confused".

The great stimulus to unionization that the New Deal and Wagner Act produced also had another curious effect on newspapers. Most newspapers had had union contracts with their mechanical department workers for years, and at the highest annual wages paid by any industry for comparable work. Consequently it superficially appeared that newspapers as a class would be relatively little affected by the growth of unions.

As a black mark on the publishers' record, however, was the theoretically indefensible fact that many if not most papers were paying their rank and file news and editorial employees lower wages than they were paying mechanical union employees.

Being a reporter was a job with romance. Half of the college graduates each June wanted to join news staffs, so there was no shortage of labor. Applicants for editorial jobs far outran the number that could be employed. Reporters and editorial desk men, moreover, were naturally individualists and many wanted only a few years of that strenuous life before graduating into lucrative posts as press agents or advertising men. In any event, average newspaper editorial wages were low, too low.

Almost over night a union of editorial department workers -- the American Newspaper Guild -- was formed. Under the glamorous and energetic leadership of Heywood Broun the guild movement took on the garb of a holy crusade and swept much of the country.

Broun's exceptional ability and flair for phrase-making had carried him from the ranks of the sports writers through a colorful career including an unsuccessful campaign for Congress on the Socialist ticket up to a reputed salary of $40,000 or more a year as a Scripps-Howard columnist. Without his personality, the guild movement would probably have never reached the magnitude or taken the course it did.

Pro-guild articles attacking newspaper publishers as a class filled The Nation and New Republic and other magazines. News and editorial department wage scales, many of which had been too low, were raised. Meanwhile the steady barrage against the newspapers from the guild still further weakened public confidence in them.

The guild movement, largely controlled by the New Yorkers with extreme left-wing tendencies, did not stop when its original wage, hour, and working condition complaints had been largely satisfied. New demands were imposed. One was for a "guild shop," which meant that every new editorial department employee must be or become a guild member. As the guild had by this time joined the C.I.O. and adopted sweeping resolutions calling on its members to support the Farmer-Labor Party and other highly controversial movements, the publishers, not unnaturally, felt horrified at the idea of agreeing to employ only such new reporters and other editorial

men as were or would become members of an organization belligerently committed to a specific side of the subjects on which they would be supposed to write objectively and impartially.

The publishers almost unanimously determined to resist demands for the closed guild shop. Although there have been a few strikes of editorial workers over that question and a few papers have capitulated, there are signs that the guild membership, except in a few cities, is gradually becoming more mature in its attitude and more appreciative of some of the problems the employers face. There is reason to hope that the guild, having largely attained its primary objective of raising salary levels, will ultimately tend to become increasingly a professional society of working journalists, comparable to the American Bar Association or the American Medical Association. If so, the guild movement will have proved highly beneficial, and Mr. Broun will deserve the thanks both of the working news writers and of the publishers for having inspired the crusade that brought that result. For the time being, however, the more radical guild spokesmen are continuing their denunciations of the publishers, and confidence in the press is being still further impaired.

Another intangible factor weakening respect for the integrity of the press has been the growing disillusionment that has resulted from the increasingly widespread realization of the amount and type of Allied propaganda designed to precipitate our entry into the World War that was published in many American newspapers in 1915, '16, and '17.

As the maladjustments in the world came into clearer focus during the miseries of the depression, there also developed a general disintegration of faith in and respect for most of the traditional pillars of civilization, including the press.

These are the principal reasons why newspapers enjoy less confidence than they did a decade ago. There is no need for alarm. As a whole, American newspapers are better than ever before. Most of them are trying harder to print the news objectively, impartially, honestly. Many of them have a deeper sense of their responsibilities. A steadily increasing number recognize an obligation to give their readers <u>all</u> points of view. It is no longer considered extraordinary for a newspaper to print, say, Jay Franklin's rather leftish views alongside of, say, David Lawrence's rather rightish views. Or to run Raymond Clapper and Frank Kent in parallel columns. The publishers are beginning to realize that the public wants, and is entitled to have, both sides.

The distinction between news and views, however, is frequently much more difficult to make than a layman might assume. Can a correspondent cabling from China, for example, give his readers a really comprehensive picture of the Japanese invasion with all its complications and implications unless he goes beyond a mere recital of specific happenings and from his knowledge of the whole situation paints in a background that will make that day's small part of the jigsaw puzzle understandable?

How far should a newspaper go in its news columns (excluding the editorial page) in attempting to explain a highly involved piece of proposed federal legislation? Criticisms are made that newspaper reports are frequently unintelligible to the average reader, because they do not explain and interpret.

Assume that the administration introduces in Congress an involved, technical agricultural bill covering crop control. The administration says it is voluntary. The opposition says it is compulsory. Should a newspaper in its news columns attempt to analyze the bill and indicate whether the proposed crop control is voluntary or compulsory? Can it, as a practical matter, do so without expressing opinion as contrasted with summarizing fact?

Democratic government cannot keep functioning unless the newspapers do their part of the job: inform people about what is happening. Sometimes it is impossible to inform without expressing opinions, because there is no proof as to what is fact and what isn't.

This whole field of interpretive news writing lies in the shadows between straight reporting of fact on the one hand and editorial expression of opinion on the other. It is one of the most difficult problems to handle, and one of the most important, that confront editors today.

Many similar questions, some trivial or innocuous and some important, stem from the same basic problem of distinction between news in the news columns and opinions on the editorial page.

Should papers use their news columns, which most everybody reads, to try to reduce the ghastly total of automobile accidents, or should they confine themselves to the editorial page that only a small minority reads?

If gambling or liquor or other laws are being flagrantly violated in its community should a newspaper confine a law enforcement crusade to its editorial page? Or is it proper by emphasis of news handling, by playing up, say, the charges of an obscure preacher, to carry on in the news columns what is in effect a crusade that theoretically belongs on the editorial page alone?

So involved are some of the daily problems of assessing news values, of interpreting news, of emphasizing or minimizing it, that no general standards can be laid down.

It is easy to say that newspapers debase public taste. Most critics fail to realize that except for New York City there are not enough potential readers in any community for a newspaper to try to be a "class medium." A newspaper in most cities must, in a realistic sense, be like a cafeteria, and try to offer something for every reader's taste and appetite, else it cannot, unless it be subsidized, hold enough readers to continue publishing.

A thousand critics have attacked newspapers for debasing the public taste, for printing or emphasizing stories with sex appeal. They might well ponder what Doctor Henry Noble MacCracken, president of Vassar College, recently said on this score:

> "News values have not varied in the slightest in 500 years. The popular ballads have first sex appeal. They tell of sensational love affairs — amours, abductions, elopements, desertions, revenges. They also tell of uncommon fidelity and constancy, of virtue rewarded. They tell of family tragedies, of murders and executions, of raids and robberies, of outlaws and "G" men, of kings and their sweethearts."

No one will deny that the newspapers do have many and varied sins to atone for, some serious and some trivial. The broad problems of newspaper invasion of the privacy of individuals and of the reporting of trials both need — and are currently receiving — serious attention. Committees of journalists of the highest professional standards, men like Paul Bellamy of The Cleveland Plain Dealer and Stuart Perry of The Adrian Telegram, are collaborating with equally distinguished lawyers in attempting to arrive at proper solutions. Probably the newspapers' rights will be somewhat abridged along certain lines either by the adoption of new legal restrictions or by the voluntary acceptance by the press of certain restraints that will reduce or eliminate the evils.

The manner in which the Lindbergs' personal privacy was invaded and the way in which the Hauptmann trial, with the apparent acquiescence of the court, was handled at Flemington are blots upon all newspapers, even though only a few may have had any direct part.

Another almost universal failing is the newspapers' reluctance to print adequate, if any, reports of libel suits, because such publication stimulates the bringing of other suits.

Most newspapers, including some of the best, have been negligent in not adequately reporting certain newspaper strikes. They probably feel that by minimizing such news they will reduce the likelihood of stimulating similar trouble for themselves.

Most of the newspapers' shortcomings are, we must admit, directly traceable to the fact that their private profit motive sometimes conflicts with their public obligation to print all the news, and print it fairly and objectively.

In other words, in the final analysis the only Achilles heel in our present-day newspapers is that they are large capitalistic enterprises. As such some of them, when their own selfish interests are involved, are, in greator or less degree, dishonest. Most of them may be too conservative in their social and economic and political views. They naturally look at things from the capitalistic standpoint. They tend to lack "social consciousness". They are too prone to think all's right in the world.

But conceding all these weaknesses in our present newspapers, serious as they are in some cases, nevertheless our newspapers today are by almost every standard far better than ever before.

And even if they do fall far short of perfection, what's the alternative?

Certainly we want no government-owned and taxpayer-subsidized newspapers. They would inevitably be completely partisan to whatever group of politicians was in the saddle at Washington, and far less honest and trustworthy than is our present press.

Even if at some future time every newspaper in the country should deliberately try to prevent the then current administration from adequately and fairly getting the news of its program to the people, the administration would always have access to the radio. No radio station, since its very existence depends on a short-term government license, could refuse any administration's requests for time. The radio chains are only too prone to give a disproportionate amount of their time to those that are currently in power. They are inevitably subservient to the existing administration, no matter which party it be. Some method should be evolved of guaranteeing that the "outs" have an equal division of radio time with which to answer the "ins". But the "ins" never are anxious to enact a law guaranteeing that, because, being in, they have the advantage.

If government subsidy is not the answer to the newspaper problem, what other alternatives are there?

Nothing prevents any rich person from subsidizing a newspaper to present his views, whatever they may be. The Socialists or Communists will reply that rich persons are almost all in favor of the capitalistic system anyway, and what they want are papers to present the non-capitalistic viewpoint, so that's not much of a solution.

Conceivably — but not probably -- a relatively highbrow tabloid morning paper condensing the news could be so brilliantly edited and operated that at five cents or ten cents a copy it could live without advertising and without any capitalistic taint. New York would be the only city large enough for the experiment and its chances for success would about equal those of a candidate opposing Joe Stalin in Russia's new free elections.

Theoretically, some group of flaming reformers might band together and edit a newspaper that could attract as readers enough followers of that cause so that it could live on subscription receipts alone, without benefit of support from capitalistic advertisers. The answer to that seems to be that such publications as The Nation and New Republic, well edited as they are, have pitifully small circulations. Considering the country's population their relatively minute readership indicates that most of the people, despite their criticisms and complaints, are at least tolerably satisfied with the existing, capitalistic press.

Nor have the Socialists or Communists or Prohibitionists or Townsendites or any other group, with the possible exception of the Christian Scientists with their Monitor, ever been able successfully to publish on any large scale or over any long period any organ that compared with the privately owned, capitalistic press. We do have the Communist Daily Worker, largely supported by party funds, and a few other relatively weak Communist or Socialist dailies.

The Communists may say, and with some truth, that the Communist viewpoint ought to be presented in our present capitalistic press. That day may come.

The widely syndicated signed columnists of today have far more power than the personal editors of a generation that is gone. Walter Lippmann's influence far transcends what Horace Greeley or Marse Henry Watterson ever had. Conceivably a Communist columnist may arise who is a sufficiently interesting writer so that capitalistic publishers will be glad to present his daily views. And if he is a persuasive enough propagandist, conceivably he may, through the columns of the capitalistic papers, do what no Communist organ could hope to do.

Since there seems to be no preferable and workable alternative to our capitalistic press, probably we shall continue to have about our present kind of newspapers so long as individualistic democracy survives in America. On the whole our papers are pretty honest and getting better each year. For the most part, they're feeling an increasing sense of obligation to the public.

Probably, when the collectivist ideas that have temporarily seized the minds of our otherwise enlightened liberals begin to lose their hypnotic charms, attacks on the press will diminish. Newspaper publishing will then gradually regain some of its former prestige, and public confidence in newspapers will slowly return.

But the next few years, while we are waiting for the happy days to come again, don't look any too bright from the financial standpoint to the publishers. Faced with staggering increases in newsprint costs and pay-rolls and other operating expenses, the newspapers see shrinking advertising revenues with which to try to meet the bills. Many papers that were highly profitable only a few years ago are now operating in red ink. Many more mergers and suspensions are inevitable.

Radio broadcasting continues to take a steadily larger part of the national advertisers' dollars. Radio stations are natural complements of newspapers. They should be allies, not enemies. Other things being equal, those broadcasting stations that are affiliated with newspapers can and do render a greater public service than do independent stations.

Unfortunately for the newspapers, most publishers were too shortsighted to apply for radio stations when the wave lengths were available. Instead of embracing radio as a new and in some ways superior method of transmitting information and entertainment, many publishers stupidly attacked radio's right to broadcast news as if it were an infringement on an exclusive prerogative of their own.

Now the spectre of television and of news broadcasting by facsimile grins down mawkishly on the publishers in their nightmares. That there will be no unearned increment for the newspapers in the next few years is certain.

But because this analysis of the current newspaper situation has stressed the economic interpretation viewpoint, let none get the impression that newspapering is a money-making capitalistic enterprise and nothing else. Newspapering is actually a little of everything, with probably more pure idealism and high adventure thrown in, with more of a mixture of professional and commercial contradictions, than any other occupation.

On almost every newspaper throughout the country there is a steady flow of romance, of crusades against corruption. Whether the crusade be against Tammany Hall in New York or against a crooked sheriff or mayor in a small community makes no difference in the thrill that the newspaper editor or reporter gets from the job. The satisfaction that comes to a working newspaperman out of a good story well written, out of the endless sacrifice and labor to get beats against one's rival, whether it be a competitor across the street or a paper in a near-by town or a distant city — that satisfaction is as great in Emporia, Kansas, as it is in New York.

When you hear a critic charge that the journalist as a professional man in an honorable craft is nonexistent, tell him his statement is bunk! There are embryonic Arthur Krocks and Harold Dennys throughout the land, thrilling at their local jobs with just as much zest as if they were heading a bureau in Washington or Moscow, willing to run any risk to get and print the news.

There's nothing much wrong with American newspapers today except us publishers.

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Appendix B

"WHAT THE NEWSPAPER PUBLISHER WANTS
FROM HIS PROMOTION DEPARTMENT TODAY"

by

JOHN COWLES
President of the Minneapolis
Star Journal and Tribune

(Talk before the N.N.P.A. Convention, New York, April 24,1944)

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In these confused times when, because of the newsprint shortage, most newspapers are declining large amounts of advertising linage, and when many papers don't want more circulation, the question may arise in certain individuals' minds as to whether, because of the war, the functions of a newspaper promotion department have not temporarily evaporated, and whether, consequently, newspaper promotion departments cannot well be suspended for the duration.

In my judgment, newspaper promotion departments are more essential now than normally. I further believe that on many newspapers the potential importance of the promotion department is grossly underestimated.

The basic problem confronting promotion departments now is just what it has always been —"How Can We Make Both the General Public and Our Customers Like Our Newspaper Better and Appreciate Increasingly What It is Doing and Can Do for Them?"

While newspapers may not have much space available for their own promotion ads, there are still countless things that alert promotion departments can do toward improving their newspaper's present and future reader and advertising acceptance.

As I see it, a promotion department is not,or at least should not be, a separate entity operating in a small, narrowly limited, watertight compartment, but is or should be a general utility department designed to assist and supplement all of the other departments in the performance of their respective functions; to make surveys for them; and give them constructive ideas and suggestions that will help them do their own particular jobs better.

An intelligent promotion manager will try to establish such a relationship with the other departmental executives that they will feel that the promotion department is an instrumentality set up to help them perform their own functions more effectively, just as a good advertising agency helps a manufacturer with his sales and merchandising problems, as well as with the actual preparation of his advertising copy.

Reader surveys, for example, come within the scope of things that should concern a promotion department. Most newspapers haven't scratched the surface of the possible benefits from intelligently conducted reader surveys. Almost every newspaper needs to learn a lot more about what the public actually does read, and what it skips, in that paper. The more experience we have in our various publications with reader surveys, the more highly we rate them as an editing and publishing tool, and the greater we estimate their future potentialities will be as we learn how to use them better.

Especially in these days of newsprint shortage, we ought to try to find out not only just what are the best read stories and features and ads, and why, but what are the poorest stories and features and ads, and why. Low readership may be the result of the content, or the typographical treatment, or both. Too few of us even begin to know much about the facts.

The typical newspaper readership survey is usually a one-day affair with just one day's paper checked for readership. Recently in Minneapolis we made a survey covering every day in the week, and we discovered some things that surprised us. We had assumed, for example, that the readership of each of our comics would hold at about the same relative level each day in the week. We discovered, however, that readership of adventure continuity strips jumps from day to day all over the board. Among adult readers there is apparently a minimum of about 35% who read each adventure strip every day, whether it is good or bad, dull or exciting, but apparently on certain days, depending I assume on the particular appeal of that day's continuity, the readership is much higher than on other days. Possibly we have generalized too much on one day surveys in the past.

Many newspaper people assume that morning papers are normally better read by men than by women, and that evening papers are better read by women than by men. We recently completed a survey in Minneapolis that showed that our morning paper was, as a whole, better read by women than by men. We discovered that our men's appeal in our morning paper wasn't as good as we had thought, but that our women's appeal was better. While we haven't found out anything startling, we have learned enough to convince us that we need to go a great deal farther than we have

ever gone before in checking actual reader appeal, as possibly various of our other assumptions are erroneous.

In addition to checking readership, alert promotion departments might well survey all the points of contact between the newspaper and its customers. A newspaper deals in one way or another with such a high proportion of the people in its community that there are innumerable opportunities for irritation to arise.

As promotion managers, charged with the responsibility of making your customers like your newspaper better, do you know whether your newspaper's telephone contacts are as courteous as they should be? When someone phones in a complaint that the address in his want-ad has been erroneously printed, are your want-ad clerks as genuinely sorry about the error as they should be? Is your credit department making friends or enemies for your paper by its collection methods? When carrier subscribers phone that they did not receive their paper, do they get as courteous treatment as they deserve? Is your purchasing department creating goodwill or illwill for your newspaper in its business contacts? Are your truck drivers endangering pedestrians and children and consequently creating hostility toward your publication?

Is your newspaper doing everything that it should to convince the mothers and fathers of your carrier salesmen, if you use carrier salesmen, as to the advantages that their boys get by carrying routes? In this time of an acute shortage of both carrier boys and circulation district men, are your carriers actually receiving the training and supervision that they should be getting, so that they genuinely receive the benefits from being carrier salesmen that they should?

What is the attitude of the school authorities in your community toward the way your circulation men handle your carriers? Do the school people think that you have too many meetings, make the boys get up too early in the morning or work too late at night? Or have you convinced the teachers and principals that the boys working for you are being well supervised, and are being benefited not only by regular outdoor exercise but by business training in sales, collections, and punctuality, and are gaining the self-assurance that comes through successfully handling and building up a little business of their own?

Aren't such matters properly within the functions of a promotion department? If you, as promotion managers, are on the proper basis of relationship with your circulation directors, the circulation men will welcome your constructive suggestions and help in making their own jobs easier, and their work more effective.

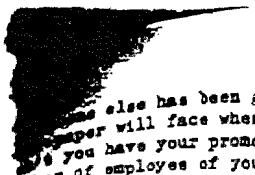
Is your paper taking community leadership in postwar planning? Should not your promotion department play an important role in generating enthusiasm and helping coordinate overall postwar planning?

Some of you may feel that such a function belongs to the editorial department, and not to the promotion department. I think it properly belongs to both of them. If your promotion department is set up on a general utility basis to help all the other departments, your editors would probably welcome your cooperation and help in making your publication more effective in community postwar planning.

At some stage after the end of hostilities, when war production workers have been largely laid off and soldiers and sailors are returning to civilian life, there will probably be large scale unemployment in your community unless there has been intelligent planning and coordination of the various projects, both public and private, that will create more jobs.

Instead of accepting the inevitability of new WPA leaf-raking projects, your paper ought to see to it that your various public authorities have plans drawn for worthwhile public works projects. In most cities, these projects are just in the conversational stage, not in actual blueprint form ready for the letting of contracts. In most communities I would guess that there has been little or no real coordination between the city, county, school, park, airport, library and other separate governmental authorities. Why shouldn't your newspaper promotion department step in, dig out the facts, and make recommendations to your editors or publishers as to things that your paper should do both to coordinate the plans of the various independent agencies and also to take community leadership in postwar planning among all the private and business groups?

Possibly your community needs large scale re-housing and postwar urban redevelopment. Perhaps your city needs new arterial highways or new zoning ordinances or new enabling legislation to make it possible to have the kind of a postwar housing and construction boom that is essential if we are to have relatively full employment. Why isn't it a proper function of your newspaper promotion department to analyse such matters and make recommendations to the editors and publishers? Whether your city does relatively well or relatively badly in postwar employment will certainly affect your advertising and circulation volume, and consequently it falls within the scope of even narrowly defined promotion department functions.



[redacted] else has been given the specific responsibility of studying the problem [redacted]paper will face when the service men return to your own organization, why [redacted] you have your promotion department do it? Probably 20% or 25% of the normal [redacted]ber of employes of your newspaper are now away in uniform. Does your paper [redacted]ve even rough ideas as to which of your present employes will be retired or re-[redacted]ased when these service men return? If your paper doesn't already have an [redacted]erall personnel department, testing the qualifications, aptitudes, aspirations [redacted]d intelligence both of new applicants and of existing employes, why shouldn't [redacted]ur promotion department make recommendations for the establishment of such [redacted]ocedures?

[redacted]w do the fellow employes of your paper feel toward your company? What don't [redacted]ey like about it? And what might reasonably be done to improve their attitude? [redacted]n't this a proper problem for an alert promotion department to give attention [redacted]?

[redacted]o, on your paper, is making the overall postwar institutional plans, coordi-[redacted]ting the ideas of the different departments? Do you anticipate, for example, [redacted]livering your papers by airplane, and if so,do you expect to use the commercial [redacted]rlines, or your own fleet of planes?

[redacted]at is your paper planning to do to improve the quality of its appeal to meet [redacted]tensified postwar competition from other channels of communication and enter-[redacted]tainment? Unless it is already being done, isn't it a proper thing for your [redacted]romotion department to stimulate and coordinate the thinking of the other [redacted]partmental executives along these lines?

[redacted]me of you may think that I am erroneously assuming that promotion departments [redacted]ve far more general overall authority than they actually do have, and that I [redacted]m assigning to promotion departments powers that are actually vested only in [redacted]he editor or publisher. I am in no sense suggesting that promotion departments [redacted]hould run their newspapers, or that the promotion manager should have authority [redacted]ver the managing editor, or circulation manager, or advertising director. I am [redacted]uggesting only that the right kind of a promotion manager should work closely [redacted]ith the other executives in every phase of a newspaper's operations, should [redacted]iplomatically make suggestions and offer ideas and help so that the executives [redacted]rimarily responsible for these other things can do their own jobs better. I am [redacted]urther suggesting that with proper tact, a promotion department possessed of [redacted]fficient brains can unobtrusively help coordinate the functioning of all the [redacted]ifferent departments, with great benefit to the newspaper as a whole.

[redacted]ctually, if properly set up, a promotion department is one of the most important [redacted]departments in the whole newspaper organization. It is, moreover, the ideal [redacted]training ground for new employes who have exceptional ability and promise.

[redacted]ecause the promotion department's functions come into intimate contact with all [redacted]f the other departments of a newspaper, editorial, circulation, advertising, [redacted]roduction and business, there is no other place in a newspaper where an indivi-[redacted]dual can as quickly get an overall picture of the institution as a whole. A [redacted]romotion manager who has brains and imagination and vision can make his into [redacted]literally one of the most important jobs in the whole institution, a job com-[redacted]parable in every way with that of the other top departmental executives.

[redacted]ith the manpower shortage what it is today, it is obviously now difficult to [redacted]employ many able and promising youngsters for work in the promotion department. [redacted]But, in normal times, the promotion department should be a basic feeder of men [redacted]into the paper's other departments. Bright young college graduates after a [redacted]couple of years in the promotion department will normally have learned, at least [redacted]in a general way, a great deal about all of the various functions of a newspaper, [redacted]and will have shown specific aptitudes. Some will have demonstrated a flair for [redacted]salesmanship, others for sparking ideas, others for writing copy. Some will be [redacted]excellent material for transfer into the news and feature departments or into [redacted]advertising or circulation. Those that don't demonstrate that kind of promise [redacted]should be quietly released to make way for a new crop of more promising youngsters.

[redacted]In the various publications with which I am connected, more of our executives and [redacted]junior executives have originally come up through the promotion department route [redacted]than in any other way. Possibly that is because instead of limiting our promotion [redacted]department's functions and activities to a few specific things, we encourage the [redacted]promotion department to regard itself as an overall utility organization to aid [redacted]the institution as a whole. This latitude gives the opportunity for the demon-[redacted]stration of talents and abilities that otherwise might lie submerged or dormant.

[redacted]Let me give a few more examples of the type of thing that I believe an alert [redacted]promotion department may properly regard as in its sphere:

[redacted]If you agree with me that one of the fundamental aims of the promotion department [redacted]should be to help bring about a warm, friendly community regard for the paper

and help make the public feel that the paper is a real community asset, then the promotion department has a wide opportunity, by suggestions, to guide and influence management toward achieving those results.

If your paper isn't as active in community affairs as it should be, your promotion department can make suggestions that will help stimulate the thinking of your publisher and editor along those lines. If your paper isn't doing what it should for your community's cultural development, let the promotion department make specific, constructive recommendations. If your paper isn't showing the interest in youth and its future that it should, if your paper isn't giving the attention to the problems of juvenile deliquency, for example, that it should, then I believe it is properly a function of the promotion department to make concrete suggestions for improvement.

Does you paper have the glamor that it might? Do all the youngsters in your city feel that they would like to work for it, because it is an exciting and thrilling institution? Does your paper have the reputation for enterprise that it should have? If not, shouldn't you, as promotion manager, be trying to do something about it?

Do the people in your community believe that your paper is doing an outstanding job on the home front to help win the war? If not, isn't it probable either that your paper isn't doing all the things that it should be or that the public isn't being adequately informed of what it is doing?

Are you increasing, each successive year, the public's realization that your newspaper is an essential community necessity and asset, and that, in proportion to its value, the cost that a reader pays for your paper is trivial? Isn't this properly the concern of your promotion department?

During war times, uncertainty, worry and anxiety make people more tense and irritable than normally. Therefore, in your public relations, isn't it more important than ever for your institution to have a warm, friendly attitude in all of its contacts with the public? Also, in these troubled times, people's minds are unusually receptive to new ideas, new impressions and new prejudices. It is possible, consequently, to change the public's attitude, either for good or ill, toward your publication far more easily and in a shorter period than would normally be the case.

Whenever I look through the trade papers and see the advertisements of various newspapers, I am always impressed by the fact that the good ads, those that stand out, are the ones that not only have human interest but which give the newspaper that they are advertising a definite and attractive personality. The bad ads seem to me to be those where the signature cuts could be transposed from one paper to another, with no one but the copywriter knowing the difference. Just as a newspaper's editorial department creates the personality of the publication in its readers' minds, so the promotion department creates the paper's personality in the minds of advertisers.

And speaking about advertising, before I close I want to say something about the relative decline of newspaper national advertising as compared with the volume of national advertising over the radio and in the magazines. At the moment, because of war activity, many newspaper executives apparently don't realize the seriousness of the steady downward trend in the relative importance of national advertising in newspapers as compared with other media.

The solution seems to me obvious. We must create newspaper networks and sell national advertising as a unit in specific groups of publications, in one large package having many millions of circulation.

Top national advertisers and agency men are not much interested in abstract discussions of the relative worth of newspapers versus magazines versus radio. Nor do they want to take the time to listen to an argument as to why the Daily Bugle is a better buy than the Daily Trumpet. They are accustomed to dealing with large figures, with nationwide sales and merchandising plans. Salesmen for the radio chains or for the big national magazines talk with them about specific programs running into hundreds of thousands of dollars and involving millions of listeners or readers. Newspaper national advertising must be sold the same way if newspapers are to get the proportion of the total national advertising dollar in the postwar period that they deserve.

Newspaper networks should be set up with twenty or forty or sixty papers on a "must" basis, with supplemental papers on an "optional" basis, just as the radio chains operate. These newspaper networks must have sufficient circulation so that if an advertiser uses them he will make a real dent on the national consciousness. The success of This Week, of the American Weekly and of the Metropolitan Group are evidence supporting my thesis, but they have only scratched

the surface. To solve the problem and get for newspapers the share of the total national advertising revenue that they deserve, we must have a number of big newspaper networks selling black and white advertising, weekdays as well as Sundays.

Most of the objections raised to the creation of such newspaper networks are fallacious. Some special representatives apparently fear that the establishment of such networks will reduce the importance of their jobs, or eliminate them entirely. That hasn't happened in radio. The volume of spot and transcription advertising in which radio stations are purchased individually, has increased right along with the growth in chain radio advertising. There still would be a great deal of newspaper national advertising placed in the present manner, either to supplement the newspaper networks or for products being marketed only regionally.

Some smaller newspapers may think that the creation of newspaper networks would work injury to them. They may fear that they would then get less national advertising, if they were not basic members of networks. I believe that fear is unfounded. If newspapers, through networks, are able to attract to newspapers national advertising that would otherwise go to the radio or to the magazines, and so double or triple the total volume of newspaper national advertising, I think all newspapers, not simply the basic members of the new groups, will be benefited. Other and smaller papers will be added as optional buys. The national advertisers who use newspaper networks in a big way will find newspapers so much more productive than they have realized that even the advertising volume of the non-network papers will also be increased.

Some newspapermen oppose the idea of newspaper networks on the theory that their establishment would require a substantial reduction in the individual paper's present national advertising rates. I don't believe that this necessarily follows. Even a 5% reduction from present individual rates might make the newspaper networks an extremely attractive buy. The important thing is that the salesmen for the newspaper networks would have a large, specific package to sell, one with a definite circulation coverage, which the national advertiser could then compare with the cost and effectiveness of a campaign on a radio chain, or in the big national magazines.

The question may arise in some of your minds as to what the newspaper networks would do in cities where there was only one strong paper. My answer is that there is no reason why a newspaper could not properly be a member of two or even more newspaper networks. Since the number of pages in a newspaper is flexible, and advertising insertions do not necessarily need to be run simultaneously in all parts of the country, there is no reason why a newspaper should not be a member of more than one newspaper network.

When national advertisers bought a campaign over a specific newspaper network, they would no longer be irritated by having a competing newspaper which they were not using complain to them about the poor judgment that had been used in that particular town, and attempt to get the business shifted. That is one of the serious troubles with newspaper national advertising today. The complaints stirred up by newspapers that have not received a schedule have probably driven more agency men and national advertisers into a mental state of preference for radio or magazine advertising than any other one thing.

Where an advertiser now buys a chain program on NBC instead of Columbia, or vice versa, the operators of the radio stations across the country that are not getting that business do not complain to the advertiser that he has used bad judgment, nor do they tear down radio advertising in general by stirring up discontent among the advertiser's sales force or customers, just because their competitor, and not they, is getting the business. Similarly, when national newspaper advertising is sold largely through networks, an individual paper will realize that the overall network picture, and not his particular city and competitive position, determined whether his or another newspaper got the schedule. Then there will be no point in any individual newspaper's attempting to unsell a national advertiser on the use of his competitor. All newspaper advertising selling will then tend to be more constructive, with benefit to newspapers as a whole.

As I believe that newspaper promotion departments should be concerned with all phases of newspaper operations, and as the relative decline of national newspaper advertising, in comparison with other media, is one of the gravest publishing developments of the last decade, I think it is entirely within the functions of newspaper promotion departments to try to persuade the advertising directors and publishers of their papers that the way to solve the problem is to cooperate in organizing newspaper national advertising networks.

In this talk I have touched on a wide variety of subjects, some of which probably seem to many of you as being outside the scope of a newspaper promotion depart-

ment, as the term is ordinarily understood. If so, I can only repeat that my idea of a newspaper promotion department is not one that is narrowly confined to a few limited fields of activity. I believe a newspaper promotion manager should feel that he has at least partial responsibility over everything that affects the well-being and success of his newspaper.

Anything that makes the public or the advertiser like a newspaper better or appreciate more deeply the service that it is rendering is properly within the functions of a promotion manager. My final words to you are simply these: learn all you can about all phases of your newspaper's operations, cooperate with all the other departments, use your imagination, and don't hesitate to make suggestions that will benefit your publication, regardless of what they may be. In that way you will be doing the things that newspaper publishers do want, or should want, their promotion departments to do.

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Appendix C

THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS

By JOHN COWLES

President of the
Minneapolis Star and Tribune

and

Honorary President of
Sigma Delta Chi
Professional Journalistic Fraternity

Speech delivered at the fraternity's national convention, Columbus, Ohio, Nov. 11, 1954.

FIRST OF ALL, may I say how much I appreciate the action of Sigma Delta Chi at its last annual convention in electing me its honorary national president for the current year, and how grateful I am for the opportunity of speaking to you today.

I'd like to discuss briefly what has been happening to daily newspapers in recent years, and what their current position in the present scheme of things seems to be. Then I'd like to philosophize a little about newspapers' future.

Sometimes we fail to appreciate how enormously the performance and quality of the press has improved in the past thirty or forty years. In each decade, almost in each successive year, American newspapers generally have become more responsible. Their news handling has become fairer, more objective and more complete. There are today only a few remaining traces of the bad conditions of half a century ago which led Upton Sinclair to write "The Brass Check."

A principal factor in raising the standards of the press has been that the press has become in large measure independent in its ownership and financially sound. No longer is there a "kept press" of any significance, whether party organs designed to advance the interest of some political boss, or mouthpieces intended to protect the economic interests of some public utility. People soon sense whether or not a newspaper is being edited in the public interest. If it is not, its patronage is likely to be scanty, and operating costs have become so large that the maintenance for selfish reasons of a continuously heavy loser is a luxury that few can afford.

AS THE BEST papers have grown and become steadily better, the poorer papers, the

marginal papers, have gradually died out or been absorbed.

Probably the trend toward fewer dailies has about run its course. Undoubtedly there will continue to be some mergers in cities of all sizes, but these will be numerically offset by the establishment of new dailies in rapidly growing smaller communities that previously had none.

In a recent speech Professor Raymond Nixon of the University of Minnesota School of Journalism said that 94% of all daily newspaper cities in the U.S. now have no locally competing papers. It is fashionable in some circles to deplore this fact. Instead, I agree with Lyman Bryson who said that the essential problem is the management for the public good of something which is by nature monopolistic.

First of all, with a handful of exceptions such as The New York Times and the Herald-Tribune, the best newspapers in America do not have a paper competing with them in their morning or evening local field. By best I mean the most responsibly edited, the fairest, the most complete, the most accurate, the best written and the most objective. As examples, I might cite the Milwaukee Journal and the St. Louis Post-Dispatch which have no competition in the afternoon field, or the Miami Herald and the Philadelphia Inquirer and the Washington Post in the morning. If for the moment we exclude tabloids from consideration as competitors, we might also include the Washington Star and the Philadelphia Bulletin, as each is the sole standard sized newspaper in its respective evening field and each is of outstanding quality. I could name many other papers in this "best" category. Almost without exception they would be papers with no local daily competitor in their field, and most of them would be papers in single ownership cities.

EDITORS AND publishers of newspapers in non-competitive fields generally have, I am convinced, a deeper feeling of their responsibilities and obligations to their communities and readers because of the very absence of competition.

Those newspapers that are not in hotly competitive fields are, moreover, better able to resist the pressure to sensationalize the news, to play up the cheap sex story, to headline the story that will sell the most copies rather than another story that may be of far more importance and significance. The newspaper that is alone in its field can present the news in better perspective, and resist that pressure for immediacy which makes for incomplete, shoddy or premature reporting. The newspaper without competition in its field doesn't have to rush on to the streets with unconfirmed bulletin rumors in order to protect itself against a rival in case the story by a long shot chance turns out to be true.

Newspapers in single ownership cities can be, and I think usually are, less inhibited about correcting their own errors, fully and fairly.

Many other examples will occur to you as to why the newspapers in single ownership cities have the opportunity to lead the way toward a better and more responsible press.

SOME CRITICS of newspapers in single ownership cities make the completely erroneous assumption that those newspapers are the sole source from which the public gets its news and information and ideas. There are, of course, dozens of other news sources: television, radio, news magazines, labor papers, community papers, outside dailies, etc., that also provide information, ideas, and points of view.

And if a "monopoly" newspaper is really bad, then it won't last long as a monopoly. New competition by abler and more socially minded newspapermen will displace and supersede it.

All of us here today are so deeply aware of the vital importance of a free press as the foundation of a free society that it is unnecessary for me to do more than touch on certain of its aspects.

The public's attitudes toward basic political institutions and philosophical ideas do change. These changed attitudes do ultimately result in new laws or modifications in constitutional interpretation. In a single generation, as an illustration, we have come to take the popular election of United States senators for granted, whereas our grandfathers expected them always to be elected by state legislatures.

Professor Nixon of the University of Minnesota, to whom I referred earlier, in an extremely interesting recent speech raised the

question as to whether there had been any shift in public attitudes which might threaten the present pattern of newspaper ownership or the principle of a completely free press.

THE NEWSPAPERS with which I am connected in Minneapolis and Des Moines have long believed in the value of public attitude, as well as reader interest, surveys. The papers in Louisville and in Atlanta place a similar value on such surveys, and in all four cities identical public attitude surveys were made last year. It is highly encouraging, I think, that the surveys in all four of these cities, Atlanta, Louisville, Des Moines and Minneapolis, showed that the public in 1953 had a higher regard for the quality and performance of the eight separate papers involved than was shown in similar surveys in previous years. This was indicated in many ways, covering the public's opinion as to the newspapers' fairness, impartiality, adequacy of news coverage, willingness to correct errors, etc. These surveys seem to me to prove that publishers can, even in so-called monopoly cities, win steadily increasing public confidence. So long as newspapers generally do have the public's confidence, and in growing measure, there would seem to be little cause for concern that the present pattern of newspaper ownership might be changed by law, or any danger of abridgement of the press' freedom.

Evidence of increased public confidence in the integrity and fairness of the press is, it seems to me, of far more importance than the fact that newspapers carried more dollars of advertising revenue in 1953 than ever before, or that combined total circulations of all U.S. papers are at or near their all time highs.

IN AN EFFORT to find whether anything significant in circulation trends is taking place I have had all the sizeable U.S. newspapers listed showing their ABC circulations as of March 31, 1947, and March 31, 1954, with their gains and losses. While overall circulations are at or close to their peaks, some changes that I think are of major significance have taken place.

Eleven of the big Sunday newspapers have lost a combined total of more than three million circulation between 1947 and 1954. The losses ranged from a low of 84,000 to a high of 963,000 with an average decline of 276,000 copies.

With a single exception, those newspapers that have had the heaviest circulation losses are not papers that regard full and fair news presentation as their primary function and reason for existence. Ten of the eleven largest circulation losers are publications which have depended primarily upon entertainment features or sex and crime sensationalism to attract readers, or are papers which frequently editorialize in and slant their news columns to present their publishers' prejudices and opinions rather than to give the straight news.

During this same seven year period, other Sunday papers have gained more circulation than the eleven that I have just mentioned have lost. Those papers that have gained circulation are with only minor exceptions publications that regard full and fair presentation of the news as their primary function and reason for being.

AN ANALYSIS of daily circulation gains and losses over this same seven year period, of both morning papers and evening, reveals the same thing as is true of Sunday papers. With a few exceptions, the daily papers that have had and are having circulation trouble are those that have relied heavily upon entertainment features and sex and crime sensationalism, or are papers which all too frequently tend to distort and slant the news and make it buttress their editorial page opinions. Those daily newspapers that have been growing in circulation are, with minor exceptions, those that try to present the news completely and without bias.

From this circulation analysis I draw these three conclusions:

First, the growth of television watching has reduced the relative appeal of mine-run entertainment features in newspapers. Entertainment features that are really first rate still have high reader interest and circulation pulling power and belong as an integral part of every well rounded newspaper. Television, however, satisfies enough of the entertainment appetite of the average person so that he or she is less interested in reading entertainment features in newspapers unless they are of exceptional quality.

MY SECOND conclusion is that because of the rapidly rising educational level of the American public and its steadily widening range of interests, those newspapers that were built largely on the formula of sex and crime sensationalism plus entertainment features no longer adequately satisfy all the interests which the reader wants satisfied. I do not mean to minimize or underestimate the reader pull of sex and crime news. I do believe, however, that because of the extraordinary rise in average years of schooling, and the increased travel, including wartime assignments, that have taken place, as well as the leadership of newspapers that have provided more complete reports of world news, many more people are now interested in reading about the whole global range of human activity than were a generation ago. Similarly, as people have become better educated and better informed they have increasingly come to sense that certain newspapers tend to color or slant the news, and many of them resent it. That is why, it seems to me, those papers that do the most complete and unbiased job of news reporting tend increasingly to hold old and win new readers.

Along this same line I am convinced that over the long pull a newspaper's editorials exert influence with its readers in pretty direct proportion to the degree of confidence that the readers have in the paper's fairness in presenting the news. I am also convinced that violent and extreme editorials are far less effective than is temperate persuasion.

SOME PEOPLE enjoy predicting the imminent rapid decline of the newspapers. First it was radio that was going to put us out of business. Then television was supposed to do it. Now some are saying that color television will do it. I have no doubt that television advertising revenues will continue to grow, and probably color television will accelerate it, but I believe that newspaper advertising revenues will also continue to grow. Readership surveys of television owning homes reveal that people are not devoting less time to reading either advertising in newspapers or to reading solid news reports and editorial comment in newspapers. They are cutting down only on the time spent reading relatively mediocre newspaper amusement features.

Recently the Archbishop of York made a

statement that I think is as applicable to America as it is to England.

In testifying before the Royal Commission on the Press, Britain's second ranking churchman spoke as follows:

"I sometimes hear that the press no longer has the influence it once possessed. I am d o u b t f u l about this. The written word makes a deeper impression on the mind than what is heard.

"The wireless (radio) is listened to by millions, but only a minority are trained listeners who could report accurately or give even an intelligible account of what they had heard only two hours previously.

"What is printed makes a far deeper impression. The written word which can be read and re-read at leisure helps to form the opinion of the more intelligent citizens who will become leaders in their locality or in the nation."

And, he added, "I am afraid that too much television gazing will leave only superficial and fleeting impressions."

ANY DISCUSSION of the future of American newspapers must include consideration of the country's population g r o w t h and the steady increase in the nation's productivity.

By 1965 the experts estimate that our population will be around 190 million, an increase of between 25 and 30 million people.

Given not more than 4% average unemployment — (current unemployment is just over 4%) — and on the basis of the present price level, our top economists now forecast that the country will have a gross national product of about $535 billion in 1965 as compared with $365 billion in 1953. This is an increase of 46%. This growth in national income will be the result of increased productivity stemming from technological improvements and a 19% larger labor force. These forecasters estimate, moreover, that this 46% increase in gross national product will be achieved along with a steady reduction of the work week. By 1965 they estimate that a seven hour day, five day week will be the normal average.

What does all this mean for newspapers? First, more population means more newspaper readers, more circulation. Second, a 46% estimated increase in national income means a substantially higher average stand-

ard of living. People will have far more income to spend on optional purchases, not just basic necessities. Third, the reduced work week and increased leisure will mean more time available for newspaper reading, and for pursuing new hobbies and avocations in many of which newspapers will serve in various ways.

IN THE EXPANDING economy of abundance, advertising of all kinds, newspaper, magazine, radio, and television, will play an even larger role that it does today in keeping the economy prosperous and the standard of living rising.

The more serviceable newspapers become, the more surely will they flourish and prosper in the years ahead. In addition to complete and unbiased news reports, people will want more interpretive news and background information. The relative importance of editorial writers will, I think, increase. Readers will want more how-to-do-it news and more leisure living news. With longer week-ends and larger disposable incomes, the leisure masses will be more interested in travel news and in news of individual participation, as well as spectator participation, sports. Interest in hunting and fishing will increase. With a steadily rising educational level, readers will be more interested in news of science, medicine and education, more interested in the fine arts, and more interested in the whole gamut of sociological problems. Top newspaper reporters will have to know as much in their respective fields as college instructors know in theirs. One test of a reporter's competence will be whether he is able to tell a complicated story simply and clearly enough to interest and inform the layman, without insulting the intelligence of the specialist.

In selecting and organizing his staff, the editor of a large newspaper will have to perform the functions that a university dean does in selecting a faculty, but, at the same time, the editor will have to see to it that his staff members also have the popular touch and down-to-earth human interests.

ALTHOUGH COMPLETE control of a publication's editorial policy must remain in management's hands, I would guess that somewhat more latitude will be given reporters and writers of superior intellectual calibre than has been customary in the past. If a newspaper is staffed by men of high professional competence whose basic journalistic philosophy is similar, the newspaper is better if the team is driven with loose reins.

Because I have stressed the importance of serious news and solid editorial content, some of you may have the impression that I think the newspaper should be solemn and dull. Quite the reverse is true. Newspapers must be inviting and appealing to read. They must have typographical attractiveness. They must have many brief stories, along with the longer ones. They must have wit and humor, and human interest, along with their service ability. Also, the use of run-of-paper color can make newspapers more exciting.

If we can avoid the calamity of a third world war which would, I fear, mean the end of civilization as we have known it, if we can maintain a rising prosperity here at home and help the rest of the free world to do the same, I think the next ten years will for well managed, well edited newspapers be brighter than any decade in the past.

Appendix E

"John Cowles Sr. and President Dwight D. Eisenhower at the company's Glendalough Retreat in West-Central Minnesota, in 1952." (Alcott, 1998, 60)

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